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Toward A Dynamic Psychology

FREUD AND ST THOMAS

by E. F. O'DOHERTY

PRECISELY because this is an area of special difficulty and great controversy, it is an area into which theologians who understand psychology, and psychologists who understand theology should not be afraid to enter. It is an area of rather special problems of exaggeration and confused thinking. The exaggerations are due perhaps to the enthusiasm of psychological neophytes, while the confused thinking may be due to the fact that very often the wrong questions are asked. The primary question here is not : What did Freud say ? and certainly not : Why did he say it ? St Thomas argued with great clarity and unusual vehemence in *De Unitate Intellectus* that the real problem was not what Aristotle may or may not have taught, but rather what was the true answer to a given problem. The Averroists may indeed have been right about Aristotle's opinion, though St Thomas thought they were wrong even about this. But either way, that is a historical question, not a philosophical or psychological one. It may be that historical questions about the content of Freud's thinking have so absorbed us that our attention has strayed from our functions as psychologists and theologians.

Thus, it is possible to argue, as Allers does, that the theories of psychoanalysis were a successful error or, to suggest with Dalbiez, that they are a ' metaphysic of incest '. It is comparatively easy to argue, as Bishop Fulton Sheen did, that Freudian psychoanalysis is based on ' materialism, hedonism, infantilism, and eroticism '. Even the very term psychoanalysis is misleading, since it has become so loaded with emotional attitudes and overtones. The term ' analytic theory ' is preferable, not only because it does not carry the same emotional load as psychoanalysis, but also because the term psycho*analysis* is more properly applied to a technique, a process, of *analysing* the psyche, and is not one but many. Moreover, it is often wrongly thought of as synonymous with psychotherapy. This is not so, as a glance at the work of Fromm, Sullivan, Roger or Frankl would show. Indeed, the mother comforting her terrified child and calming him through an empathic relationship is using a very efficacious form of psychotherapy, such as a counselling psychologist might use *mutatis mutandis* with an anxious adult, without involving any form of analysis.

It is convenient to use the term ' analytic theory ' in the singular, much as one can use the term ' atomic theory ' or ' theory of number ' in the singular, without prejudice to the fact that many theories, even conflicting ones, may be involved. Analytic theory in this sense is not a philosophy of man, but a set of concepts and hypotheses based on clinical observations and developmental studies, which have achieved the stature of theory because of their explanatory and predictive value. It is not a complete and finalized body of knowledge, but an ongoing process ; not an *a priori* construct, but an attempt to reach a conceptual understanding of empirical fact.

It is easy to argue that, as conceived by some of its exponents, it is a pseudo-religion : a body of doctrine based on unprovable and untenable hypotheses about man, which are to be taken on faith ; which has its own sacred books, its rite of initiation (a personal didactic analysis), its ritual performances (couch, record of dreams, transference, abreaction); and which derives both its *raison d'être* and its strength from the comfort it gives to its believers. It is true that many of the claims made for it in the past would not now be made ; true also that statistics are not available to prove its efficacy as a therapeutic method. It is true that some of its ablest exponents have taught erroneous doctrines, and that some of its practitioners have on occasion given immoral advice to patients. But there still remains a number of new insights into the human mind which it would be foolish to ignore. It is difficult to separate these insights from the philosophical errors (e.g. about man and freedom) and theological errors (e.g. about the nature of religion) which some of its ablest exponents built into it. It is difficult to separate these insights from the theory and practice of ' psychoanalysis ' in the usual meaning of the term. For the theory and practice of 'psychoanalysis' in this sense are as closely bound together as theory and experiment in chemistry. Molecular, atomic, and nuclear theory may all have derived historically from a mechanistic world-picture and from inadequate and sometimes erroneous experimental evidence. Nevertheless they have given invaluable insights into the nature of the universe. One does not reject physics because Laplace was an atheist or Eddington a Kantian. The new insights into the physical world are shared by many who have no notion of the philosophical background in which they appear, nor any accurate understanding of theory, and who have never heard of the experiments of Thompson, Rutherford, or the Curies.

The *theory* that the universe began in the explosion of a primordial atom and that it is flying apart at a rate approaching the speed of light is a far cry from the careful analysis of certain lines in the spectrum showing a shift towards the red end. Here theory and experiment are inseparable, as they are throughout the whole of natural science. And

yet the intelligent layman who knows neither the theory nor its experimental base can share with the scientist something of the latter's new insight into the physical world. Insight—understanding, comprehension—is something more than a knowledge of either theory or experiment.

Psycho*analysis* is a process (of *analysing* the psyche) which differs from other, perhaps shallower, analyses in as much as it aims at a deeper penetration. This deep penetration of the personality, so far from being repudiated by the Church, was endorsed by Pope Pius XII, who called for better and deeper penetration. Analytic *theory*, historically, is a body of psychological knowledge, mixed with error, which has arisen from this penetrating process. The term analytic theory does not belong to, and should not be allowed to become the private property of any great name or school of psychology. It is high time it was rescued and restored to the public world of the intellect. It is clear that the whole of human personality is not given in simple conscious introspection, as Humean psychology would seem to have assumed, nor in the observation of overt behaviour, as Watson seemed to suggest. Nor can philosophical reflection and analysis in this field reveal, any more than it can in the physical world, a knowledge of empirical fact. Not all mental processes and contents are observable ; we are not wholly revealed to ourselves, because our consciousness is not a Cartesian consciousness such as would be appropriate to a disembodied spirit or, in Thomistic terms, because the natural condition for the human soul is in union with matter, and the material as such, since it is singular, is not immediately present to intellect. Assuming however that intellect can, though laboriously, come by devious ways to a knowledge of process and content which is not immediately given to introspection, assuming further that the world of mind and personality is a world of order (it is unthinkable that it should be chaos, or that liberty should mean anarchy), the term analytic theory, if it can be rescued at this late hour, should be reserved for such a body of knowledge. As I shall use the term analytic theory therefore, I use it not to indicate the theories of Freud or Jung or Adler. I use it as a synonym for dynamic psychology, to indicate a body of knowledge about (a) the degrees of accessibility of mental content, (b) the processes, both innate and acquired, which are not listed in the classical (descriptive) psychology of conative or affective life, (c) the affective dimension of cognitive process (this does not mean a theory of affective knowledge, but a study of the influences of emotion on cognitive process at all levels, especially the emotional charge of images and ideas), (d) the etiology of certain common aberrations, and (e) the nature of certain defence processes which, as far as one can see, are common to the human psyche everywhere. Understood in this sense, it is clear that ' neither in purpose, philosophy or technique is

analytic theory hedonistic, frivolous or pleasure-loving' (L. Kubie). Many physicists, many physicians, are hedonistic, materialistic, atheistic, but neither physics nor medicine can as such be accused of these errors. It is a pity that adjectives which apply to human beings should be applied uncritically to knowledge itself. It is worth the effort of trying to tease out the valuable elements from the rest in classical analytic theory, and to add to these such concepts as may be found necessary to produce an integrated and adequate theory of the deep processes of the human psyche. Freud himself was an ascetic, not a Sybarite. His notion of *eros,* properly understood in such an adequate and integrated theory, will be found to lie much closer to St Paul's *caritas* than many contemporary interpretations of the word charity.

Freud wrongly thought that he had explained away the existence of God by his brilliant analysis of infantile fears and the introjection of the father figure. Actually, properly understood on this point, what he has given us is an invaluable insight into our *affective attitude to God.* We can now understand a little better the difference between the Old and New Testaments (contrast the prohibition on pronouncing the name Yaweh, with 'When you pray, say Father'). We can understand better the prohibition in the law against graven images. Until the revelation is complete and the transcendent Godhead can be thought of in non-anthropomorphic terms, there must be no risk of the creation of infantile gods through the reification of projected infantile imagery in stone or bronze. Similarly we can understand better than was possible in the past the nature of adolescent atheism and revolt. It is a common mistake to think that the psychologist, who diffidently claims a little light where there was none, is claiming both to understand completely the behaviour under examination, and to exonerate from all responsibility the individual whose behaviour it is. Zilboorg has pointed out the 'error of thinking that once you discover that you have an unconscious motive for doing something, you may conclude : (1) that the motive is invalid ; or (2) that it disappears ; or (3) that you lose the desire to do what you want to do " because you know the unconscious reason why " ; or (4), what is even worse, that an unconscious motive is neurotic by very virtue of the fact that it is unconscious.'

Freud thought in terms of a pansexualist explanation of all man's higher forms of conduct, including literature, art and religion. He succeeded in making clearer the sexual elements in some otherwise non-sexual patterns of behaviour, for instance in some hysterical malfunctions, in some forms of oral satisfaction, in symbolic imagery, and in private rituals. He made clearer the sexual (though unconscious, or unacknowledged) elements in some patterns of behaviour which were for centuries known to be undesirable or unhealthy, such as particular

friendships in colleges, or excessive use of physical discipline, either in punishment of others, or self-inflicted in the name of mortification. ' Man ', as Zilboorg again rightly points out, ' is not a disorderly mass of obscure though set " Freudian " mechanisms . . .' But a right understanding of these ' mechanisms ' (the term is unfortunate) not necessarily in terms of what Freud thought they were, but in the context of our complex spiritual-material nature can help us in many ways. Thus we can now understand better why some marriages fail, we can understand *ratum et non consummatum* problems a little better, we can understand why some good people find it difficult to go to Holy Communion, why some are filled with terror instead of peace at the Gospel message. Some mysteries of human behaviour (the devils of Loudun, Savonarola, recurrent claims of virgin birth) become intelligible. The relation between asceticism and sado-masochism has become clearer. The Church has always known that asceticism could serve neurotic purposes. One remembers the *flagellantes* and their condemnation : but the difference now is that we can understand the kind of personality which is likely to indulge in such practices, even to predict from seemingly trivial behaviour disorders the possible future aberration. Our basic need for both ritual practices and symbolism becomes intelligible : both are based on our complex nature, neither wholly rational nor wholly sensory. If we were wholly rational we would not need them, as Adam did not. If we were wholly sensory we would be incapable of them. But given our complex nature, the sensory element in them allays our sensory malaise, while our rational component can elevate them to a significance they could not otherwise have. Many problems which baffled our forebears are now partially illumined. One thinks of the compulsions and obsessions, the belief in and burning of witches, the ready acceptance of the validity of visions and voices. Many of these phenomena were known to be of natural origin, but many also were attributed to demonic sources by earlier generations. One remembers with dismay the *Malleus Maleficarum* of Fathers James Sprenger and Henry Krämer (1490). It is now not only easier to distinguish the natural from the supernatural and from the demoniacal, but it is also possible to understand why in a particular individual these manifestations take the form they do. It is even possible sometimes to cure them.

Analytic theory has permeated almost every aspect of contemporary life. It has affected most of the sciences which deal with man, and all the sciences of society, from economics to jurisprudence, from anthropology to political theory. It affects law and culture, art and literature. It should not be surprising therefore to find that it can also teach us something even about the spiritual life itself. As it stands, it cannot be accepted uncritically. It involves assumptions about the

nature of man, and about all his higher functions which are not consonant with our philosophy or theology. But neither should it be dismissed out of hand. One must reject many of its typical concepts, and its *a priori* assumptions. But there still remains a substantial amount of truth, based not on assumptions, but on clinical observations. It would not be reasonable to reject fifty years of clinical observation without very sound reasons. The chief flaw in analytic theory is perhaps this: it tries to describe mental processes as if they were occurring to mental contents conceived substantially in their own right. Its language is that of physics, engineering, and the natural sciences generally. It uses analogies and suggests that they are literally true descriptions of phenomena. Our task must be to get behind the semantic barriers and the analogies, and to discover the realities which it purports to describe. We must in other words try to formulate a Thomistic dynamic psychology. The Thomistic dynamisms will be found in the concepts of *appetitus naturalis, concupiscentia, timor naturalis,* and *voluntas ut natura.*

There are not one but two scales of mental health : the one running from the level of the very disturbed person up the scale to the minimum level of mental health, which involves only an absence of pathological process. But the second scale runs from this level up to the perfection of the mature personality on the natural plane, plus the full development of all its potentialities under the influence of grace. In respect of the first scale, the paranoias, the depressive states, the schizophrenias, etc., analysis alone is of little or no avail, though, even at this level, some psychotherapy (and in many cases a great deal of it) is necessary for the full rehabilitation of the sick person. The real efficacy of analytic processes however is found on the second scale. Very few people can achieve full maturity on their own. There remains in most of us some residual effects of infantilism, of emotional distortion, of non-rational thinking. This is sound theology, as well as being good empirical observation. It involves the familiar aphorism of the moral theologian, that the will has not got *potestas dominativa,* but only *democratica* over the lower functions. It is true that many of the effects of the non-rational processes of the psyche can be understood at the conscious level, and some can be coped with directly by the ego—the conscious rational source of self-control. Classical analytic theory on the whole tended to undervalue the efficacy of the ego, which became almost a wholly passive observer or recipient of experience. But, more and more, the great theorists and practitioners have restored the ego to its proper function : that of knowledge, of initiating and guiding action, of controlling the lower processes, and of goal-seeking. Many good people could benefit by a sound therapeutic process which would free the ego—the intellect and will, if you prefer—from the influence of non-rational forces. We are none of us wholly emancipated yet.

The task of the dynamic psychologist, or analyst (using the term without prejudice to any 'school') is to reveal the hidden, or unacknowledged, or unknown forces which distort the judgment, thus giving us a clearer picture of ourselves. Dynamic or analytic concepts in this sense are not tied to any -ism or person. Know thyself, *Cognosce teipsum,* was familiar to the Greeks, and St Augustine carries it to a higher plane, by amending it to read '*Noverim me, noverim te*'—'That I may know myself, and that I may know Thee, O Lord'.

There are laws, natural laws, of psychic process and of psychic development, which in no way negative our freedom. The process of concept formation, the thought processes, the stages of maturation, are governed by law. These laws are not necessarily determining processes : but it is interesting to note that even determining processes do not destroy our freedom. *Voluntas ut natura* is not free in respect of the ultimate end. If some of these laws, either in classic or dynamic psychology (the so-called laws of association in 'classic' psychology, *gestalt* laws of perception in more recent non-analytic theory, the mechanisms of dynamic psychology), have been too naively formulated or formulated in a philosophically unacceptable way, it behoves us to re-formulate them accurately and in an acceptable way, much as the laws of physics have had to be re-formulated many times over, but not summarily rejected. No one would now reject the concept of dynamic process, or of unconscious influence on the will. But a naive hypostatized thing called 'the unconscious' must be rejected with the 'bump of laughter' or of 'mathematics' of the phrenologist. Few would reject the notions of regression, repression, projection, rationalization, and the rest, though their interpretation in mechanical terms on the basis of physical analogies is simply too naive to be true.

The error of the great analytic theorists, if one can put it in a sentence, is the limiting of causality in psychic process to efficient causality. The human act is reduced to an *actus hominis,* which in turn is accounted for wholly by finding its causes in antecedent experience, working through imagery or memory. Thus, the process of analysis, or psychoanalysis, aims at revealing the hidden material derived from earlier, usually infantile, experience, on the ground that this hidden material (plus of course its emotional charge) is the cause of the present symptom or behaviour disorder. In a similar way, the present structure of the personality is accounted for wholly in terms of the experiences which produced it. The error is that of a totalitarian solution : one factor instead of many ; a monistic solution where a plurality of causes, especially final causality or purpose, may be necessary to account for the phenomenon. But to say this is not to reject the causality of earlier experience. In Thomistic terms, this remains with us in the form of habitual knowledge. The soul has received a 'form', in classical

terms, without matter, and this form remains within the psyche, but in respect of consciousness only *in potentia*.

Such a person is *in potentia* in respect of this content, as long as he is not consciously thinking of it. Nevertheless in a true sense he possesses this knowledge—is ' informed ' by it—and so is in a different potential relation to it from that of someone who has never undergone the experience at all. This would appear to be the truth of the handy ragbag holdall concept of the unconscious.

In addition to the type of causality attributable to mental contents possessed in the form of habitual knowledge, a valid dynamic psychology needs also the concept of *innate process*. This means that the psyche must not be thought of as a mere recipient of experience, a *tabula rasa* in the phrase beloved of undergraduates (though of course, *pace* Plato and Jung, all its cognitive content of whatsoever kind must be acquired : there are no innate ideas) ; nor should the psyche be thought of as a mere onlooker, a passive spectator at a Humean theatre of the mind where events linked only by the superstition of association laws merely succeed each other on a mental stage (except that, as Bradley pointed out, in this Humean world there is no theatre and no stage, but only the succession of events). The reality of the soul is such that it is of its own nature active (it is form, and *forma dat esse et agere*). The psyche (the apparatus of process and content called mind) is also active of its own nature. Soul, generically, is a wider concept than mind, embracing as it does both for Aristotle and St Thomas the notion of life principle even at the plant level. Understood in this way, living but non-cognitive and wholly unconscious beings such as plants will still have innate processes (dynamisms, but not yet *mental,* though genuinely psychical in an etymological and philosophical sense). These innate dynamisms will in general be those concerned with nutrition and reproduction. The notion, therefore, of living, purposive, but wholly unconscious activity is inherent in St Thomas's thought at this point. The rational soul is the source in man of all his activities, including the basic vegetative processes, and is certainly in Thomistic thought the source of even the most basic of physiological processes. It is *virtually* also a sentient and a vegetative soul, which means in the present context that it is the source of the innate processes or dynamisms which we have just called living, purposive, but wholly unconscious. The key concept here is the notion of *appetitus naturalis*. Not only are there innate conative processes, or dynamisms, in the psyche, but according to St Thomas, these extend even to the inorganic world. Thus, material things have a 'natural appetite' to preserve their own existence. In English, the term 'natural appetite' suggests an anthropomorphic type of thinking which was not that of St Thomas. Indeed, not only does he not attribute a ' human ' desire to inanimate matter, but rather attributes

the intrinsic dynamism of matter (which the scientist calls 'laws of conservation of mass, of energy,' etc.) analogously to man. It is important to remember the purposive character of action of all kinds (*omne agens agit propter finem,* even inorganic matter) when we consider motivation later.

The operation of *voluntas ut natura* is a good example of the real nature of a psychic dynamism. For while the will follows the intellect, it nevertheless of its own nature seeks happiness. What precisely it will seek *in re* may be determined by experience, education, choice. Thus it may seek happiness in wealth, or power. But the seeking of happiness itself is not the result of experience, but is a process inherent in human nature—a dynamism of the will itself. Paralleling this on a different plane, there are other such innate processes. Thus concupiscence (called libido by the analysts), generically defined as an appetite for sensory pleasure, is an innate dynamism, a function of *appetitus naturalis* proper to organic sensory life which would incline us or impel us to seek certain satisfactions, even apart from the residual effects of earlier experience. St Thomas makes this point clear in several places (e.g. Ia 2ae, XXX, 3 ; and XXXI, 3) when he distinguishes two kinds of concupiscence, one *secundum naturam,* the other *secundum apprehensionem.* In a similar way, fear can be thought of as an innate dynamism, according to Ia 2ae, XLI, 3, c, where St Thomas speaks of a *timor naturalis,* according to which nature flees from a destructive evil *propter naturale desiderium essendi.* This concept of innate fears receives an unexpected confirmation from behaviouristic psychology, according to which certain experiences precipitate fear in a child without previous learning or experience on the child's part, e.g. a sudden loud noise, or the feeling of being left unsupported in mid-air, while other fears are acquired (as a result of a conditioning process, in behaviourist terms, or *secundum apprehensionem* in St Thomas's terms).

Freud's *eros* can thus be understood as a process of natural appetite combining conservation of being with pleasure-seeking *concupiscentia,* and the avoidance of destructive evil *propter naturale desiderium essendi* (*timor*). But that is not all. That is what it would be if we remained at the level of the organic and sensory. But as consciousness awakens, and rational processes come into play, *voluntas ut natura* will at first complicate the picture, since it will at first seek happiness in the objects of *concupiscentia* ; but later, following the illumination of intellect, will be capable of consciously controlling or repudiating the demands of the subrational dynamisms. But they remain with us as active and powerful forces.

It is true that the sensory appetite follows sensory knowledge, just as, at rational level, *nil volitum nisi praecognitum.* We have been arguing however that in addition to motive in the sense of known-object-attracting-appetite, the appetites are active in their own right : antecedent to

knowledge, and independent of consciousness. The best example of this is the infant's appetite for food, oxygen and sleep. The concept of motivation in Thomistic terms has to take account, therefore, of three sets of innate dynamisms: a natural inclination to seek sensory pleasure (*concupiscentia secundum naturam*), to avoid unpleasant experiences (*timor naturalis*), and to seek happiness (*voluntas ut natura*). These can co-exist in the same act, either in co-operation or in opposition.

In addition, however, we have a further type of motivation to take into account : that of final causality. The important point here is that this *is not necessarily always conscious*. *Omne agens agit propter finem* : everything acts for an end, not just conscious beings. It is not always easy to discover the end, but it is inherent in the notion of action itself that it should be directed to an end. We do not always consciously choose the end of our acts : an *actus hominis* carried out in sleep, or in unconsciousness, or unconsciously, is not carried out for a consciously chosen end. In a similar, but far more important, way, the end chosen in consciously directed behaviour may be only one aspect of the whole act, while other processes (of *concupiscentia* or *timor*) are receiving an unconscious gratification. Their satisfaction was also part of the motivation that brought about the act, and may indeed on occasion be the really effective motivating force, while the consciously chosen end is little more than an occasion (acceptable to intellect and will) upon which sensory appetite can be satisfied. This is what analytic theory describes under the general head of unconscious motivation, rationalization, and sublimation. The Thomistic dynamisms account for the processes involved here without their mechanistic overtones.

It is salutary, and sometimes vitally necessary, to reveal to ourselves what the purpose of some of our actions really is. Sometimes, however, our purpose may be so deeply buried that we need help to discover it, and it may take prolonged analysis to bring to full conscious acknowledgment the real meaning of our acts. We are familiar with the notions of habitual and virtual intention in moral theology : these are special cases of unconscious motivation, the first being the case of a motive once conscious and now no longer so, the second being the more extraordinary case of finality or intention which would have been ours if we had ever thought about it, but which in fact was never conscious at all. They are therefore variations on the general theme of unconscious finality or purpose in human acts and are mentioned here only to show that the idea of our having a motive in our acts which is not known to present consciousness is not in itself a new discovery. But the application of this concept in many areas is new. Thus, we now know that neurotic, and especially hysterical, patterns of behaviour are purposive or meaningful in ways not known to the neurotic or hysteric, and indeed in ways which the neurotic could never discover for himself,

since part of the neurosis is precisely the avoidance of reality. In Freudian terms, such people may be living by the pleasure principle, and refusing the transition to the reality principle, but not in the way we do when we deliberately choose to indulge some pleasure instead of coping with a problem. The neurotic does this, but does it *unconsciously*. The trained psychologist can sometimes discern the meaning of a neurotic pattern. Thus, for example, a novice pining away through a series of illnesses may be simply protesting his unwillingness to go on in religious life. *Actiones sunt suppositorum*. It is the *person* who is behaving thus or thus, whether it be in speech or in other symbolic language.

It is perhaps a good thing that so much of our motivation is hidden even from ourselves. ' Father, forgive them for they know not what they do '. Some of the saints would appear to have been given, perhaps as a special prerogative of grace, the gift of total insight into their own motivation. If we had total self-consciousness, we would see all the ramifications of our motivation (this appears to be the case with disembodied spirits). If we had total self-control, we would rule all our acts solely by intellect and will. But we have no such prerogatives. We are free, but our freedom is limited : among other things, limited by the factors we have been considering. Sometimes, in strictly pathological conditions, freedom can disappear. The most obvious case is that of *passio totaliter tollens usum rationis*. But well short of this condition are the obsessions and compulsions which affect behaviour and reduce responsibility. An obsession is an image, usually emotionally charged, which appears involuntarily in consciousness, and which cannot be voluntarily dislodged. A compulsion is a strong tendency to act in some particular way, which results from the efficient causality of a mental content or process, such that the will may become powerless in respect of the act. The psychologist's and psychiatrist's job is the restoration of freedom, where it is impaired by subrational forces. How can psychological insights aid us in the context of moral problems ?

It is often thought, wrongly, that the psychologist's analysis of motivation and human behaviour is aimed at exonerating the individual from responsibility. This is a great error. To forgive is not the same as to exonerate. To exonerate means to declare that an individual has not committed a crime. To forgive means to declare him guilty, and then absolve. The more one understands the nature of the human act and its motivation, the easier it becomes to forgive. Unfortunately, some psychiatrists have on occasion made the mistake of thinking that because they can understand some of the causes of an act, that therefore the act was not free. This is tantamount to assuming that free acts must be uncaused acts, which is an impossibility. Psychological insight can sometimes reveal the causes, hidden from consciousness, which are operating to induce the assent of the will and, by releasing it from their influence, make it easier for the will to make right choices.

One might perhaps indicate some of the ways in which psychology can be of help to moral theology as follows :

(a) It can help to reveal to an individual the nature of his own motivation, perhaps at levels hitherto unknown to or unacknowledged by him. Thus, for example, taking liquor in excess may have an obvious end, pleasure. But a man may conceal this from himself and tell himself that he is taking it for health reasons. This is an obvious and simple case. It may, on the other hand, be a much more serious situation : he may be over-indulging to allay an anxiety (a *timor naturalis*) he does not wish to face, which in turn may be linked with a sexual problem.

(b) It can help to reveal hidden dimensions of purpose in an act. There are two elements here. On the one hand, it may be possible to show that a particular act or pattern of behaviour has a significance unknown to or unacknowledged by the agent. The child refusing his food is a good example at a pre-moral level, since the act may not mean that the child is ill, but that he is protesting against a lack of affection in its environment. The youth who steals indiscriminately and hoards the objects may not realize the sexual significance of his acts. On the other hand, an act may not of itself have a particular significance, but in an individual case may be part of a private symbolic language.

(c) It can help to reveal a complex psychological condition of obsession and compulsion, which may occur consciously or unconsciously outside the region of voluntary control. Complex processes of this kind may become so divorced from the rest of the psyche as to appear to function independently of the personality. Compulsive handwashing of the Lady Macbeth type is a good example. But very far short of this pathological stage, less severe conditions may impair the individual's freedom. A process of this kind may occur simultaneously with an intellectual function in full waking life, but as it were ' encapsulated '. An adolescent's dream of himself as a great explorer may occur simultaneously with his attempt to master mathematics. His excitement may be displaced from his dream on to his subject, thus facilitating its learning, but this is rare. More usually, the obsessional condition will impair his rational functioning. In Thomistic terminology, this condition may be described as an emotionally charged unit of habitual knowledge which emerges spontaneously into consciousness, and which because of its efficacy in producing motor-behaviour diminishes responsibility.

In so far as we can reveal the existence of any of these elements we can hope to release the will from their influence, in much the same way as by removing a young man from bad companions, we can free him from their influence. This does not ensure his reform, but at least it makes it possible in circumstances where otherwise it might seem to be impossible. What the youth does in the context of his bad companions may indeed be an evil act, for which he must be held responsible,

but as long as he remains there he may not, humanly speaking, be capable of reform. In much the same way, the will in the context of these irrational forces may still be free (i.e. these forces may not be such that they destroy voluntariety) but, until they are revealed and removed, it may be, humanly speaking, impossible for the individual to reform. It is more difficult for a person who understands the real meaning of his acts, and *who is aware that others may also understand it,* to continue as before to do these acts.

The relevance of analytic theory to problems of spiritual direction can be illustrated, perhaps, by looking at some special problems, in particular the problem of guilt. There are two main types of guilt, the rational and the neurotic. Rational guilt is the state of mind of a person who judges that an ac the did, voluntarily and knowingly, was wrong. It is a judgment of intellect in the context of human acts. Neurotic guilt, on the other hand, is a state of the emotions. A healthy emotional state may accompany rational guilt, just as neurotic guilt may accompany the intellectual judgment of wrongdoing. But they are distinct phenomena. Within neurotic guilt one may distinguish many components : fear, anxiety, dread of and desire for punishment, self-loathing, self-directed aggression, conflict between desire and aversion, etc. It is a pathological state in much the same way as any unhealthy prolonged indulgence of an inappropriate emotion may be unhealthy. It is further complicated by the fact that the individual who experiences it may cling to it for the masochistic pleasure of self-torture. It should be noted conversely that some who should experience some emotional guilt for their wrongdoing can in fact exhibit a too detached unemotional apathy : this state can be just as pathological as neurotic guilt.

Neurotic guilt is allied to but not identical with scrupulosity, and admits of many degrees. Its most usual manifestation is in connection with sexual offences, real or imaginary. It is found in depressions, hysterical states, anxiety states, schizophrenia, and involutional states. It can be relieved by many psychiatric procedures, from pharmacological and electro-convulsive therapy to short-term or prolonged psychotherapy. Once the pathological process is relieved or removed, the judgment and will can function once again as rational processes in the control of behaviour and the production of meritorious acts.

A special case of neurotic guilt perhaps is the coexistence of *anxiety* and genuine sorrow for sin. It is only right that one should experience some anxiety in connection with sin, so that this state is not necessarily a pathological one. It may even be a necessary and salutary thing to provoke some anxiety in a penitent who is particularly cold and detached, and this both for natural and supernatural reasons. The criterion to be applied in deciding whether or not the anxiety is unhealthy is the degree, if any, to which the penitent's normal adaptation is interfered with.

Nevertheless, it is usually safe to be suspicious of anxiety, particularly if it is prolonged through time. It may indicate a lack of faith (though this is rare) in the mercy of God, but more often it is a concealed request for human sympathy and affection. Sometimes again it is evidence of the existence of a moral problem different from the manifest one, usually more serious and hidden or unacknowledged. In this latter case an understanding of deep personality process may be efficacious in unexpected ways. Thus the inability of an individual to go to the sacraments may be due to an awareness of serious sin which the penitent cannot mention through morbid distortion of emotional life over a long time. This is compatible with all the outward signs of faith and devotion. One can sometimes release all the unacknowledged material by a sudden sharp probe.

Religion can sometimes be made to serve neurotic needs. Thus, for example, the compulsive-obsessional type of person in a severe or marked state of his neurosis is fairly easily identified. But milder forms of the same neurosis may seek expression in the use of meticulous private rituals in religion, or even may put religious objects to fetishistic purposes. Or again, the virtues of obedience and humility may be distorted to serve neurotic needs. A little deep probing will sometimes reveal the satisfaction of a masochistic pleasure associated with neurotic guilt in the need for being put under obedience, and sometimes indeed the process of disobedience may be revealed as a means of self-punishment, by incurring guilt which then has to be expiated, sometimes by public penance. Clearly this is a problem of the very few, and should not be exaggerated or generalized. It is analogous to the process one finds in juvenile delinquents, and in children who 'punish' their parents for their lack of affection by stealing, or by other behaviour disorders. Other regressive patterns of behaviour, such as infantilism in many forms, may also be discerned. It may be important also to examine the complex motivations and vicarious satisfactions which are involved in otherwise admirable activities.

Clearly, this whole field demands more study and research. Our purpose was to show that there already exists a great deal of dynamic psychology in the traditional concepts of Thomistic thought. It surely cannot be expected that the solutions to the problems which arise in this domain of research should be simple. On the contrary, they are extremely complicated, and require the *diligens et subtilis inquisitio* (Ia, LXXXVII, I, C) by which alone St Thomas says we can come to an understanding of the mind. The Thomistic dynamisms touched on in this paper should prove a useful starting-point for the construction of a valid dynamic psychology, useful alike to the psychotherapist and the director of souls.[1]

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[1] Based on a paper read at the Stillorgan Conference on 'The Priest and Mental Health' held at the St John of God Hospital, Stillorgan, Co. Dublin, October 1960.

The Problem of Scruples

by J. R. M. NOLAN

THEOLOGIANS are agreed that scruples are often due to mental illness. As long ago as the fifteenth century St Antoninus wrote: 'Scruples often arise from a manic or depressive illness in which the imagination, and sometimes even the reason, are disturbed'. They may also arise, he adds, from excessively severe penitential exercises. But the theologians are equally certain that scruples may have a moral or spiritual aetiology. To quote only one, but that the greatest of modern moral theologians, St Alphonsus says quite simply: 'Scruples are often due to pride'.

Mental illness, excessive penances, and the vice of pride are diverse entities, and at first sight it is not clear why and how they should have the common effect of tending, on occasion, to produce scruples. It is the purpose of the present paper to show, in the light of modern psychological knowledge, that the theologians' contentions are essentially correct.

We must start from the fact that in the development of the human personality, psychological guilt antedates sin. That is to say, the basis for feelings of guilt is laid down in the developing personality before the child comes to the use of reason, consequently before it can commit sin, and *a fortiori,* before it can be sorry for sin.

When the infant begins its existence, there are no psychological elements in its personality which restrict, inhibit, and guide its actions. But within a short time its parents begin to train it—that is, they begin to make demands upon it and to require that it conduct itself in socially acceptable ways. It is at this stage impossible to train the child by verbal instruction or to make it truly understand what is required of it. Consequently, training is given by a system of reward and punishment. The rewards and punishments are in part corporal, but to a large extent they are psychological, and the infant is rewarded or punished by the conferring or withholding of parental affection. The parents adopt certain emotional reactions in regard to different segments of the infant's behaviour and the infant responds to these. Further, quite apart from specific instances of reward and punishment, the infant is affected by the habitual emotional attitudes of its parents. It internalizes these emotional attitudes, making them its own, and there thus develops within its own psyche a structure which tends to give rise to emotional experiences analogous to those which were formerly aroused by parental attitudes. That is to say, the psyche becomes self-rewarding and self-punishing.

This acquired psychical structure is sub-rational, because it is essentially a complexus of emotional habits existing at the sensory

level, and pre-rational, because it arises before the age of reason. It is a permanent element in the psyche, continuing to exist even in adult life, like the *passiones* in general, and it is not immediately and directly under the control of reason. Yet it comes to influence and to give a flavour or tone to all our rational and conscious activities, though usually we are not aware of this. It is important to note, too, that in the training of an infant considerable emotional load is attached to areas of behaviour which have little to do with morality—toilet training, for instance. In fact this sub-rational factor in the psyche does not reward and punish the personality in accordance with any moral code, nor does it function according to the laws of reason. It operates automatically, independently, rigidly, in those areas in which infantile experience causes it to operate.

We may understand this point better if we look at two analogies.

When a child learns to speak, it not only learns a particular language, it also learns to speak with a particular accent which it acquires from its parents and companions. The child frequently acquires new words in this language by a process of formal learning—as when it asks ' What's that ? ' and is told what it is. But normally the child is not consciously taught a particular accent, nor does it consciously learn an accent. It picks it up and learns it unconsciously. The consequences of this are interesting. Adults are quite conscious of whether they are speaking or not, and can consciously choose to speak or to be silent. But normally they are not conscious that they are speaking with a definite accent ; and if they choose to speak, they must speak with that accent. Analogously, unconsciously acquired emotional attitudes, which we have lived with since infancy and consequently escape our attention, continuously and indeed necessarily, modify and affect all our behaviour.[1]

A second analogy comes from Scripture. St Paul speaks of a law which he finds in his mind, and of another law which he finds in his members, which resists the law of his mind, so that the things that he would do, he does not. He is referring to concupiscence. The psychical element we have been referring to is yet another law. Both it and concupiscence exist at the level of the *passiones*. The difference between them is that one is innate and is more usually conceived as inciting us to act, the other is acquired and is more normally conceived as inhibiting us from acting. The latter inhibits, prohibits, disapproves, and punishes by giving rise to feelings of guilt. I suggest that we call this psychical element the sub-rational conscience. Obviously we are here using the word ' conscience ' analogically—as St Paul uses the word ' law ' analogically.

[1] If we look at things in this way we can see that the concept of unconscious influence does not in any way imply a diminution of moral responsibility.

The quality and flavour of this sub-rational conscience will depend on the innate temperament and disposition of the person, and on its experiences and environment. It will depend in a special way on the experiences and environment of early childhood, and most particularly on the emotional characteristics of its parents. In general, a somewhat rigid and severe sub-rational conscience will arise if the parents are cold, reserved, and demanding. Emotional hardness is more punitive than physical harshness.

The existence of a sub-rational conscience does not normally remove moral responsibility, any more than does the existence of concupiscence. Both are dispositions to act in certain ways, but the freedom to act or not remains.

The rational or moral conscience clearly begins to form at a later date than the sub-rational conscience. It grows gradually ; its development is the task of a lifetime, its perfecting the work of a saint. Each person's conscience is psychologically unique. While all men have the faculties of *intellectus* and *voluntas,* and all men have the *passiones,* these grow and mature in each individual in a unique way. Of each person we can say : *non est inventus similis illi qui conservaret legem Excelsi.* Cultural and social environment, individual experience, personal free decisions, the sub-rational conscience—all play a part in the structuring of the moral conscience.

We must now turn to other matters. It has been held that all cases of scrupulosity are simply obsessional-compulsive neuroses with a religious content. Certainly this is sometimes the case, and we must now give our attention to this form of mental illness.

A compulsion is an idea, an affect, a form of words, or an impulse to action, which injects itself into consciousness and provokes a sense of inner resistance. Most normal people have experienced compulsive impulses to action : to avoid walking on the lines in the pavement, for instance, or to tap the spoon twice before taking sugar. We find too a good deal of compulsive ritualism in children's play. In the neurotic form these compulsions become so severe as to be disabling.

Compulsions may be due to physical illness—e.g. encephalitis lethargica. They may also occur during the development of schizophrenia.[1] In these cases the subject usually obeys the compulsion without any insight into its irrationality. In the neurotic form the subject does see the irrationality of the compulsion, even if he yields to it.[2]

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[1] Schizophrenia is the commonest of the psychoses. It is characterized by dissociation between the intellectual and affective processes. It has nothing to do with the Jekyll-and Hyde split personality, which is an hysteric condition.

[2] A psychosis is an abnormal or pathological mental state, constituting a definite disease entity. Its major forms are schizophrenia and manic-depressive psychosis. A neurosis is a functional mental disorder, of psychological origin. Its major forms are anxiety-neurosis, hysteria, and obsessional-compulsive neurosis.

These compulsions may be of the most varied form. A mother may experience an impulse to kill her children whenever she sees a knife ; a man may feel an impulse to hang himself whenever he sees a rope. . Ruminations may occur, and the patient may lie awake for hours brooding over such questions as ' Who made God ? ' and ' Why is there something rather than nothing ? '.

An interesting feature of many compulsive neuroses is the development of ritualistic behaviour. The subject feels repeated compulsions to wash his hands, for instance. He may not be able to go to bed until he has arranged his clothes in a particular way. He may become anxious about his excretory functions. He may have to perform some action perfectly, even to its minutest details.

Apart from cases of psychosis or physical illness, these compulsions tend to develop in obsessional personalities. Obsessionals are usually above the average in intelligence, and they normally do not come from the lower classes of the community. They are rigid, somewhat unimaginative persons, rather constant in their emotional tone without extremes of elation and depression. They set themselves high standards and suffer if they do not live up to them. They tend to be exacting superiors and parents. They are capable of considerable self-sacrifice and devotion to duty. These people may develop a compulsive neurosis at a time of special strain—the death of a relative, promotion to higher office, etc.

Why ? The most probable explanation is that obsessionals have a somewhat harsh and rigid sub-rational conscience which imposes severe demands upon them and punishes them by giving rise to guilt-feelings if they disobey. It is the abiding relic of the conscience of early childhood, formed before the use of reason was attained. Now it is well known that under stress people tend to give up their mature patterns of action and to fall back on primitive or infantile behaviour patterns. Thus when the obsessional comes under stress, the sub-rational conscience becomes increasingly strong and may seriously disturb the functioning of the moral conscience.

The rituals found in so many compulsives are acts of defence and propitiation, analogous to the fear-ridden ritualism of primitive religions in which the worshipper is dominated by the fear of unknown preternatural forces. These rituals often have a symbolic value—hand-washing is obviously a symbolic cleansing from guilt and assertion of innocence. The compulsive does not know what he feels guilty about—he may not even recognize his feelings as being guilt-feelings—and consequently reasoning—his own or others—has no effect. He may easily believe that the source of his feelings is one particular act when in fact it is quite another.

It is at once obvious that in many cases scruples are simply obsessional-

compulsive neuroses with a religious content. The Catholic schizophrenic may imagine that he is a saint, and no doubt many mentally ill Russians imagine that they are Stalin. Similarly, the compulsive who is an accountant checks and re-checks his books, and the Catholic compulsive examines and re-examines his conscience, binds himself to make the sign of the Cross five times before saying his prayers, and then to say three Hail Marys without any distractions.

These people need the care of a psychiatrist. But they need also the care and advice of a spiritual director. Moreover, there are, we believe, cases where scruples are a spiritual rather than a psychiatric problem. The work of the confessor is very much the same in all these cases, so we can leave our discussion of his task until after we have considered these other forms of scruples.

Scruples may arise, for instance, in the following way. A young boy has begun to indulge in sexual phantasies. He is not certain—at least he tells himself that he is not certain—that they are sinful. Doubts grow and feelings of guilt increase. Finally he consults his confessor. He is told that this form of phantasy-activity is sinful. A period of severe scrupulosity may ensue. His rational conscience has proved inadequate and deceptive, and he may begin to worry about many events of his past life and about whether he now adequately resists sexual temptations. He is in fact unable to tolerate the acceptance of moral guilt in this area because his sub-rational conscience is the source of severe prohibitions in this same area, and if he admitted to himself that he had done wrong, it would produce overwhelming guilt-feelings. The problem is the same whether or not he has in fact committed any moral fault—his moral conscience has failed, his sub-rational conscience has become relatively stronger, and it produces anxiety and feelings of guilt rigidly, automatically, and harshly. It can cause the boy to feel guilty even when he has not sinned ; it may also cause him to defend himself against its attacks by denying to himself that he has sinned when in fact he has.

Scruples may arise too in the case of an elderly person whose life has not been marked by any particular dedication to religion. The approach of death—not necessarily its imminence—may lead to more serious thoughts about religion. Worries arise about youthful behaviour and about matters previously confessed. One matter is cleared up but another soon presents itself, and soon there is an ever-widening area of worry. Here we can see the person's growing realization that he has allowed himself to be guided by an inadequate conscience—not in the sense that he could not tell the difference between right and wrong, but that he devoted his life to the pursuit of the less good. On closer investigation we may see that the penitent is (a) defending himself against the admission of a great amount of moral guilt by securing

from his confessor re-assurance on particular matters, and (b) that he is also avoiding a fuller turning to God by concentrating attention on particular items in the total area of his relationship to his Maker.

These two examples illustrate a further point. Scruples are not the single entity they might seem to be from the standard statement that a scrupulous conscience is one which, on insufficient grounds, fears that an act may be sinful. There are indeed cases of what has been called moral phobia—as when a young girl is afraid to wear *any* make-up lest she incite some man to sin. But many of the penitents whom confessors call scrupulous have quite other forms of scruples. Scrupulosity always has a function or purpose, of which the penitent may be unaware. Repeated self-accusation may have expiatory value. It is then equivalent to the excessive penances of which St Antoninus spoke. They are both forms of self-punishment motivated by the sub-rational conscience. We must make it quite clear that we are not saying that *all* penitential exercises are motivated in this way. We are referring only to some cases of excessive penance. The traditional teaching that the advice of a spiritual adviser should be sought in this matter is a practical recognition of the dangers of non-supernatural motivation.

Again, scruples may be a means of avoiding the fulfilment of some religious duty which, for one reason or another, has come to provoke anxiety. Thus a person who fears to receive Holy Communion may make use of some peccadillo occurring soon after Confession to excuse himself from receiving Communion. Self-accusation in the matter of sex may simply be a means of allowing the penitent to enter symbolically—i.e. verbally—into the forbidden area.

(Penitents sometimes accuse themselves of having blasphemous thoughts after receiving Holy Communion. If the penitent is a young person, referral to a psychiatrist is advisable. Indeed recent evidence indicates that in some cases of severe scruples in young people, there is an underlying schizophrenic process.)

We said earlier that scruples are sometimes due to pride. How this can be, we can see in the following not uncommon case. A young man of obsessional personality[1] enters religion. He sets himself high standards and keeps to them. Suddenly a collapse occurs. There is a period of intense depression, of morbid guilt-feelings, of self-accusation. The person insists that many things he has done imperfectly were in fact grievous sins. What has happened is that he has been seeking not perfection, but self-perfection. He is of course not conscious of his inadequate motivation, but in fact he has that inordinate desire for his own excellence which constitutes pride. But it is a gentle form of the vice, meriting sympathy rather than severe condemnation. Its source

[1] To say a person has an obsessional personality does not imply that he is mentally ill or that he is necessarily unsuited for the religious life. We are all a little queer.

lies in the sub-rational conscience rather than in consciousness. He has been seeking a perfection demanded of him by elements in his own psyche, and he has not been consciously proud. The sin is one of weakness, not of maliciousness.

We can now see why the theologians were right in saying that mental illness, excessive penances, and pride could all lead to scrupulosity. Basically, these are all associated with an exacting sub-rational conscience. As always, advances in scientific knowledge ultimately show how great is the practical wisdom of the Church.

An obsessional-compulsive condition is always difficult to cure, and the spiritual director of a scrupulous penitent has a difficult task. In serious cases he should advise his penitent to consult a psychiatrist, for, as we have seen, there may be an underlying psychotic process which only a specialist can diagnose.

But whether the penitent is under the care of a psychiatrist or not, the task of the spiritual director is essentially the same. He must listen to the penitent, especially in the earlier interviews, remembering that the person doing the most talking is the one being interviewed. It is only by listening that he can hope to see with which particular form of scruples he is dealing. There are of course infinite forms, and we have only touched on a few. The vital question to be asked in each case is not ' What are his scruples doing *to* the penitent ? ', but ' What are they doing *for* him ? ' It is only when the function of the scruples is apprehended that the scrupulous penitent can be understood and corrective measures taken.

The director must accept the penitent as a real person with a real problem. It is unwise to tell him that he is foolish—he already knows that. It is much better to tell him that other people have the same difficulties, that his condition will continue for a little while, but that he may hope for an eventual improvement. The aim of all this is to objectify his attitude to the pathological element in his personality. But it is not good always to tell the penitent that he has not committed any sin. Scruples are often a mechanism by which a person is defending himself against the admission of guilt, and sometimes he needs the help of his confessor to accept his guilt. We shall return to this point later.

It is commonly said that the director must act as the patient's conscience, and this is indeed true, but it needs to be rightly interpreted. In the scrupulous penitent the functioning of the moral conscience has been upset by the obtrusion of the sub-rational conscience.[1] It is the director's duty to bring about the strengthening of the moral conscience, and he may aim at this by allowing the penitent to depend on his decisions. He may act, that is, as the penitent's conscience.

[1] We are aware that this has been denied by recent writers, but if moral conscience be understood after the manner we described earlier, our contention remains true.

But it is important that he should act as the penitent's moral conscience, and that he should not act after the fashion of a sub-rational conscience. He should not be rigid, automatic, reproving. This may seem obvious, but in practice a scrupulous penitent is a load for any director to bear, and there is a continual temptation to escape from involvement in the problem by giving definite commands to the penitent. When he fails to act according to these commands, it is easy for the director to convince himself that the blame is entirely the penitent's and that the director has done his best. But if I tell an invalid to walk, and he doesn't, I can't conclude that he wouldn't—perhaps he couldn't. The difficulty with the obedience-therapy is that, if it is inadequate, it can never be known to be inadequate, for its failure will be attributed to the disobedience of the penitent.

This is not to say that obedience should not be required of the penitent. It should. But the director who is exacting the obedience should examine his own motivations very carefully and make sure that they are the correct ones.

Of great importance, in our view, is attention to a little-noticed phenomenon. Scrupulous penitents are not *sorry* for their sins—they merely *feel guilty* about them, which is a very different thing indeed. Investigation will show that they resemble a malpractising accountant who is worried because he has destroyed the mathematical perfection of his account books, not because he has defrauded his employer. The scrupulous penitent feels guilty because he has violated his ideals, not because he has offended God. The forgiveness of confession matters little to him, because confession removes sin, but it does not cancel the fact that he has sinned. Hence, paradoxically, the director must train his penitent in the spirit of Christian compunction. It is well that in his interviews with the penitent he should not concentrate the discussion on the immediate problems of the scruples, but should instead undertake a spiritual spring-cleaning. The penitent's concept of God, of Redemption, of sin, of forgiveness—all of these need to be discussed. The director will find that many of them will have an unexpected emotional load, and the penitent may have serious misconceptions about fundamental religious ideas. This will particularly be the case in the area of sin and forgiveness, and here the explanation of the nature of compunction may be of considerable importance. For the assurance of the forgiveness of sin enables us to accept more readily the fact that we have sinned.

Much remains to be said, much more remains to be known. But, 'Wovon man kann nicht sprechen, darüber muss man schweigen'.[1]

[1] Based on a paper read at the Stillorgan Conference on 'The Priest and Mental Health' held at the St John of God Hospital, Stillorgan, October, 1960

Millions need not go Hungry

by ARTHUR MCCORMACK

IN recent years, problems of world food supply and world population have come to the fore. Much has been heard of the under-developed and under-privileged countries. Often, their plight has been exaggerated by well-meaning but over-enthusiastic people and, still more, by doctrinaire family planners who have stressed out of all proportion, the tremendous extent and urgency of the needs of the hungry millions and thus have aroused feelings of hopelessness, suitable for the propagating of their negative panacea for what they call over-population : world-wide contraceptive birth control.[1]

They have given the impression that there are too many people and there is not enough food ; and that we may indeed be facing disaster in the near future because the resources of the world are not adequate to meet the demands of an unprecedented rapid growth of population.[2]

Their views, which at the beginning obtained wide publicity, especially in the Anglo-Saxon world, provoked a corresponding reaction from the optimist school of thought and from more expert scientific opinion. Recently, it has been widely pointed out that agricultural and technological progress, far from being the mere palliative that neo-Malthusians hold it to be, can solve the world's food problems and even take care of the demands of a rapidly expanding population.

The pessimists have said that it would be barely possible to double the food supply of the world to keep pace with the doubling of the population expected by the year 2000,[3] many of whom already live in dire want ; most of the agricultural experts have shown that the world can support many times its present population. Indeed, Mr Colin Clark at the Dublin Social Study Week last June pointed out, on the basis of complicated calculations which he has made, that the world could support a number of people ten times the present level at the highest nutritional standards and 92,000 millions (compared with its present nearly 3,000 millions) at the present Japanese standards, much higher than that of most under-developed countries ; indeed that now

[1] E.g. Sir Julian Huxley, in the Foreword to *Human Fertility* by Robert Cook (Gollancz) says ' more than *three-quarters* of the billion human beings in existence are under-nourished '.

[2] Cf. Sir Charles Darwin, *The New Scientist*, 21 Nov. 1957, and his Rede Lecture at Cambridge, 1958.

[3] The population of the World in 1900 was estimated at 1,602 millions. Reasonable estimates give 5½ to 6 billion (thousand millions) by 2000 A.D.

the whole food supply for one man for a year could be grown on a plot of land of twenty-five sq. yards.[1]

This clash of opinions often leaves the intelligent layman puzzled. According to the view he accepts, he may either feel that it is very little use trying to do anything about the needs of huge populations who are living in hunger, or it may seem to him that the problems are not so great as they first appeared and that they can so easily be solved that we would be better occupied with our own domestic concerns, instead of heeding the pleas that great aid should be placed at the disposal of the less favoured countries.

That this is not an academic point was illustrated to me a short time ago. A Catholic organization heavily defeated a motion to support the Freedom from Hunger Campaign of F.A.O. or indeed use any of its extensive funds to help the under-developed countries at all ; the reasons given were that the problems of these countries could easily be coped with and, in any case, were not at all as grave as they had been made out to be.

It is indeed true that these needs, especially the amount of actual acute hunger in the world, have been exaggerated. Mr Clark has shown that it is quite untrue to say that two-thirds of the population of the world is suffering from hunger.[2] The blacking out of huge areas of the under-developed lands on maps of the world and the giving of the impression that all the people in those lands have not got enough to eat, tend to give a false picture and do no real service to the cause of helping the hungry millions who really exist.

There is a great deal of hunger in the world to-day, but it would be difficult to assess the exact dimensions of it. Experts are not even agreed on what constitutes hunger in terms of calories, and hence statistics are bandied about without bringing conviction to the average intelligent person.

Nevertheless, when all these reservations have been made, it is clear that very many people, far too many people, live in conditions of want and under-nourishment. Millions do go hungry ; whether they constitute two-thirds, one half, one quarter or even less of the world's peoples seems to me to be beside the point ; when the population of the world is so great, even one per cent would be a challenge to the consciences of the more prosperous countries. There is dire poverty, visible to the most casual traveller and testified to by experts who have studied the under-developed countries.[3]

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[1] Cf. Colin Clark ' World Population ' in *Nature,* 3 May 1958, ' The World can Feed its Peoples ', *World Justice,* Louvain, Sept. 1959.

[2] Cf. Clark, op. cit.

[3] Cf. Various publication of U.N.O. and F.A.O. and associated bodies. Also, Donal Faris, *To Plough with Hope,* London, Gollancz, 1958. Andrew Shonfield, *The Attack on World Poverty,* London, Chatto and Windus, 1960.

Many people live at or near subsistence level and lack many of the primary elements of a life in keeping with human dignity. It has even been estimated that 30 million people per year actually die of starvation.

The world, then, is indeed divided into 'haves' and 'have-nots' and to haggle about the extent of actual hunger seems to me undignified ; it would be criminal if we sheltered behind such controversies in order to escape responsibilities to our less fortunate brethren.

To correct the exaggerations of those who magnify the problem is not to deny that it exists, nor to play down the immense needs of those in want. To say that the problem can be solved and, theoretically, easily solved, does not mean that it is being solved or that it will be solved without great, sustained and generous efforts. But, by putting these problems in perspective and by showing that they are not so enormous that they cannot be tackled, we do the best service to these countries and form a solid, truthful basis for an appeal to the justice and charity of more favoured nations.

Moreover, the misery and degradation of poverty include more than mere physical hunger. They involve all the evils summed up in the unemotional word, under-development : lack of basic education, lack of decent housing, lack of opportunities for improvement, inability to put into practice the simple rules of hygiene, which would be a defence against mass diseases, lack of industrial development, dearth of adequate capital and savings to make the vicious circle of poverty breeding poverty into a constructive spiral which would narrow the gap between the privileged and the under-privileged. Nor is the hunger for material things alone. The Popes have stressed that a certain modicum of economic prosperity is necessary for the things of the spirit to have a full chance to exercise their influence on ordinary human beings. For example, Pope Pius XII said :

> . . .the normal growth and increase of religious life presupposes a certain measure of healthy economic conditions. Who can resist a pang of emotion upon seeing how economic misery and social evils render Christian life according to the commands of God more difficult and too often demand heroic sacrifices.[1]

Indeed when we talk of actual acute hunger, although it does exist, we are on less sure ground, statistically, than when we turn to the economic and social conditions which I have indicated, and which are more easily contrasted with those in the prosperous countries of the West. This contrast brings out the glaring inequalities which exist in the world today. Statistics always tend to over-simplification but a few may be helpful to highlight the situation.

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[1] Address to Members of Italian Catholic Action, 3 May 1951.

In the U.S.A., the population of 176 million people have an annual income of nearly 500,000 million dollars, an average of about 2,800 dollars per head. In free Asia, in Africa and Latin America more than 1,000 million people have an annual income of only 120,000 million dollars or 120 dollars per person. In India, one of the black spots of the world food and population picture, the average annual income is only 60 dollars.

The U.S. with only 6.5 per cent of the world's population produces 40 per cent of the value of the total goods and services available to mankind ; with 52.4 per cent of the world's population Asia produces 11.5 per cent of the world's annual income.

In these circumstances, rapid increase of population—doubling in about forty years—cannot be looked upon as an unmixed blessing, no matter how much love for children or desire for new life there may be in the individual or in the culture of a particular nation. Resources must at least keep pace, if present low standards are to be maintained. A trebling of resources would hardly be sufficient under population pressures to make life a little more secure and healthy, a little better nourished, a little better housed and clothed. The problem is indeed grave and *unless some radical solution is found and implemented* the outcome in the next forty years, in Asia at least, must be deepening misery, anarchy and despair.[1] Even the most optimistic expert viewing the present situation and future possibilities would not, I think, disagree with this appraisal.

It was therefore extremely heartening to hear the scientists, at the British Association meeting in Cardiff last September in their symposium on Food and Population Problems, saying unanimously that there *is* such a radical solution and that it *can* be implemented. They all took a vigorous positive line with regard to the problems and with great realism and practical understanding outlined how the resources of the world could indeed meet the present crisis. I was especially impressed by their down-to-earth approach and their stress on what could be done *now* and in the immediate future, often with quite simple procedures, to tackle world agricultural and economic needs. They all insisted that massive external aid in addition to self-help was necessary. This is obvious when one considers that the amount of savings needed for an economic ' break-through ' or ' take off ' into self-sustained sufficiency is 10 per cent or even 15 per cent of income. But they were all of the opinion that it could and should be done.[2]

In this they confirmed the hopeful words written over five years ago by Dr Lamartine Yates, reviewing the first decade of the F.A.O. :

[1] Cf. Barbara Ward, ' The Economic Revolution ' in *the Saturday Evening Post*, 14 May 1960.

[2] See *Proceedings of British Association*, Cardiff, 1960. (These no doubt will be printed ; my information is taken from the duplicated copies of the speeches kindly put at my disposal by the British Association.)

Many are pessimistic as to the capacity of the under-developed countries to climb out of primary poverty and, capacity apart, as to their possibility to do so. They point to the apparently meagre mineral resources of many of these countries, the eroded lands and unfriendly climates, the rapidly expanding population on territories in many cases already over-crowded, the absence of capital required, the hopelessness of finding enough exports to pay for needed imports of equipment for industry, and many more equally convincing arguments.

It may, however, be pertinent to enquire what the outlook was in Europe 200 years ago when she started pulling herself up by her boot straps. Could it not be said that then her peoples were too poor to save on any massive scale, that her agriculture could not be made more fruitful and her people would not adapt to factory tasks and urban ways of life? And yet the revolution took place.

Is the plight of the under-developed countries to-day any worse than that of Europe in 1750?

True, there are no vast prairie lands in temperate zones waiting to be ploughed nor are there empty spaces into which to move surplus population on a massive scale. But Europe had gone far down the road to industrialisation before she had recourse to importing food and exporting people.

To-day agriculture has other tools for increasing production without having to rely on new acres by the million. Also the newer forms of power for industry—oil—and still more—atomic energy—mean that industry can be located where the people are, not vice versa.

Moreover, there are nations standing by who have already modernised themselves and who can lend their skills and experience for the job.

All these things give solid ground for believing that, during the next 100 years, there could happen in the remaining two-thirds of the world what hitherto has happened in only one-third—a revolution in modes of living, in standards of living, social patterns, arts and skills, culture and thought. *If this be a fair assessment, it is just about the most exciting prospect for a century-to-be that mankind has ever faced. By comparison most of our preoccupations appear puny indeed: cold war, class war, colour prejudice and so on. What is within human grasp is nothing less than the abolition of primary poverty in the last strongholds of poverty, the bringing of low income peoples, not to equality of income with the wealthiest peoples, but to hailing distance, so there is no longer a wide social and material gap between them.*[1]

The Freedom from Hunger Campaign of F.A.O., inaugurated in July of this year, aims by its five-year effort to set in motion and co-ordinate measures which will make this dream a reality.[2]

Many conditions, social and political, as well as economic, are required to be fulfilled in working towards this inspiring goal of an

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[1] Dr Lamartine Yates, *So Bold an Aim*, F.A.O., Rome, 1955.

[2] For a full account of the aims and methods of this campaign see Dr B. R. Sen, Director General of F.A.O. 'Freedom from Hunger' in *World Justice*, Louvain, June 1960.

era of plenty for the world. For the results of agriculturally applied science and technology to be effectively distributed throughout want-ridden sectors of a lesser-developed region, and for these results to be absorbed, lastingly and cumulatively, by the whole human and social framework of a region, certain economic and institutional conditions have to be established.

Among the most crucial of these conditions are good systems of land tenure, provision of adequate and stable prices to agricultural producers, farm credit facilities, adequate marketing facilities, including co-operatives, and a general expanding economy with the right balance in each country, between the various economic sectors.

The Freedom from Hunger Campaign is intended to focus attention on the needs of the less favoured countries, to show how these needs can indeed be relieved and to arouse public opinion in the more favoured countries so that these huge problems will be attacked with the massive assistance they deserve and which could ensure success.

The Campaign will be waged on three fronts : the information and education front, the research front, and the action front. Education and information will be aimed at bringing about in the more advanced countries an informed understanding of and an intelligent sympathy with the problems and needs of less advanced countries ; within these countries themselves it will aim to create a broad general appreciation of the avenue of progress awaiting bold and confident action. The research front will intensify the search for solutions to problems of agricultural development in individual countries and regions. The action front will seek to develop concrete projects to be carried through in individual countries, which would range through the whole field of food distribution and consumption, and would include measures to enhance the buying power of those countries most in need of more food and better food.

This five-year Campaign was substituted for the idea of a Freedom from Hunger Year in 1963 which Dr Sen originally proposed. It is obviously more satisfactory to tackle the immense problem in this way. 1963 with its culminating point of a World Food Congress will be the central year of the Campaign, but the fact that it will not be only a 'Year', similar to the World Refugee Year, will enable interest to be sustained longer and will highlight the fact that the attack on world poverty and hunger does not consist in bringing charitable relief of a temporary nature. It is clear from what has been said that what is needed in areas where food is chronically scarce is to break the vicious circle of poverty and stagnation and enable the local people to fend for themselves. Such action must be initiated locally but, if it is to be successful, it will need very great outside assistance for some time to come.

The work of F.A.O. in this campaign will not be to supplant the

work of the various existing organizations of a governmental nature and non-government organizations working for the same ends but to co-ordinate and supplement their work.

It is appropriate that the F.A.O. should have organized this Campaign for it is the organization concerned, as its name suggests, with food and agriculture. While the ultimate solution to the problem of poverty must be sought by an integrated approach to the balanced development of under-developed countries, it should be recognized that agriculture is the key sector in such development. Sixty per cent to 80 per cent of the people living in under-developed countries derive their livelihood from the land. Agriculture must provide the food for the people and the margin to start a process of capital formation. It is essential, therefore, that the initial impulse to increased production and improved well-being be generated in this sector.

This Campaign represents a major attack on world poverty such as those who want a constructive and sane approach to the central problem of our time have long been pleading for. Behind it is the best kind of humanism which seeks to establish a world order based on human rights and social justice. It stresses the duty of more fortunate countries to share increasingly their prosperity and skills with those less fortunate than themselves. Professor Toynbee has suggested that future generations may see, as the greatest achievement of the twentieth century, not its wonderful scientific discoveries, but its realization, for the first time in human history, that man's knowledge *can* be shared over the world for the common good. Along with this realization is growing the conviction that it *should* and *must* be shared.

The background to this humanism in considering world problems is the fact that physically speaking, we are now ' one world '. As John Murray pointed out in a thoughtful article on collective responsibility (Studies Winter 1959) the problems of one country are no longer that country's sole concern, they may affect and, almost certainly will affect other peoples. This humanistic feeling of collective responsibility, which has already found expression in the United Nations Charter and Point Four of President Truman may be incomplete, but it is one which Catholics can wholeheartedly embrace and deepen and it is their special duty to do so. Our Lord's own words about those who will qualify for admission to eternal life give us a warning that we must not be so heavenly minded that we are no earthly good. The Church has been accused of being unprogressive, and even inhumane, condemning hungry millions to misery and want, even paving the way for Communism, because she rejects the panacea of a world-wide campaign of artificial birth-control, so zealously but so shortsightedly proposed in the Anglo-Saxon world, as a solution to the problems of ' overpopulation ' and under-development. The Catholic attitude must not be character-

ized by merely negative opposition to immoral proposals but by an all the more generous support of all constructive measures to help under-privileged peoples. If it is immoral, and I would add impractical, to reduce the future number of the under-developed world's inhabitants by artificial birth control, it is absolutely essential to provide for them and to make it clear that the choice ' Birth control or Starvation ' is *not* the dilemma which is facing even the hungry over-crowded millions in countries which are suffering from relative regional over-population.

The special contribution which Catholics can make at the speculative level is to base the effort to help on more fundamental and permanent grounds than economic expediency, political apprehension or even natural humanism or humanitarianism.

What are the real reasons why the people of relatively more favoured countries should be concerned with the peoples of under-developed areas? Why should they put at their disposal their surpluses, or vote huge sums in ' foreign aid ', or make available numbers of technical experts to help these countries to develop their resources? After all, even more favoured countries have their economic difficulties, their unemployed, their own under-privileged. Surely charity begins at home. Why should, for example, the refugees of Hong Kong be helped, when their activities may lead to depression in Lancashire?

To this the Catholic replies that Christian teaching has always held that mankind is a single family under the Fatherhood of God, the Creator of all men. The idea that we are our brother's keepers, to which lip service has always been paid but which, hitherto, great distances and physical factors have made to seem a remote obligation, comes directly from Christ and now begins to be brought home to us with regard to all the world in which we live.

'Charity begins at home' is a saying of the pagan philosopher, Terence. It was Christ, the Son of God, who, in the parable of the Good Samaritan, implied that charity begins away from home with people who are not of our country, or race. Or rather the concept of home has to be extended to the whole world. The Christian dare not ask for a passport before he thinks fit to do the works of charity, still less of justice.

And so the Popes, especially Pius XII, have stressed our duty of helping our neighbour in the international sphere, as well as within our own countries. They have provided general principles which can support, and indeed have supported, the emerging ethic of international social justice and have even indicated the broad lines on which it could and should develop.

Thus Pius XII stressed that all men, by the very fact that they are men, have a right to the use of sufficient material goods as will enable them to support life in accordance with human dignity;[1] he emphasized

[1] See *Pius XII and Overpopulation* by the present writer. (Catholic Social Guild, Liverpool).

that there must be a more just distribution of the world's resources so that all men should have at least the minimum share of earthly goods to which their nature and the will of God entitles them. He stressed that this right was absolutely fundamental, and even the right to private property and the rights of the State over its own land were subordinate to this. He condemned the glaring inequalities between the 'haves' and 'have-nots' and pointed out that this would only lead to explosive resentment. Pope John XXIII in blessing the Freedom from Hunger Campaign said :

> You are welcome, for your aims coincide with those of the Church in this matter and the task on which you are engaged seems supremely deserving of Our approbation and encouragement. What, in fact, is the Church's task on earth ? It is to continue the work of Christ, and it is written of him that ' he went about doing good and healing . . .' (Acts 10 : 38). He also warmly recommended to His followers the spiritual and corporal works of mercy, and the first on the list of these latter is ' to feed the hungry '.
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> Millions of human beings suffer from hunger ; others, while they do not, strictly speaking, go hungry, are underfed. These are the facts. They must be made known, they must be preached from the house-tops, as the Gospel advises : ' Preach ye on the house-tops ' (Matt. 10 : 27). Consciences must be awakened to a sense of the responsibility that rests on the human community and on each individual, on the most privileged people especially. Nobody can nowadays offer the excuse, in a world where distances count for nothing, that he is unaware of the needs of his far-away brother, or that it is not his job to help him. We are all collectively responsible for the undernourished.
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> It is with joy that We contemplate the immense possibilities of this campaign. We feel sure that it will have the support of all men of good-will and of all institutions, private and public, which are truly concerned for the good of humanity. Thus We are confident that, in giving Our fullest encouragement to you, Our words will travel beyond Our present audience and will reach all men of good-will as a pressing invitation to take part in this great charitable movement, this immense ' work of mercy ' which the Campaign against Hunger is to be.[1]

But it must be admitted that although papal principles have been laid down and although the teaching of social justice in general has also its application in the international sphere now that the physical entity of 'one world' has come into existence, these principles are often so general and vague that they provide far less accurate guidance even for the best intentioned in the international sphere than was provided with regard to social justice within the nation by the teaching of

[1] Pope John XXIII, Address to the International Conference organized by F.A.O. 4 May 1960.

Rerum Novarum and *Quadragesimo Anno*. We need a moral philosophy of international social justice. Humanly speaking, those two encyclicals were preceded by years of social thinking applying Catholic moral principles to concrete situations ; they were followed by more years of study and action on the part of bishops, theologians, social scientists and statesmen before the social justice of the twentieth century replaced the haphazard economic ' free for all ' of the nineteenth century (e.g. Bishop Keppler anticipated much of the social teaching of Leo XIII by forty years).

The international situation now imposes an obligation on Catholics to work as hard for a code of international social justice in line with the principles of natural law, of which the Church is the guardian and interpreter, and at the same time in harmony with the facts of our twentieth-century world.

The Research Centre for International Social Justice recently founded in Louvain aims to meet this need, as it should be met, at the highest level. It seeks by means of its high-class periodical *World Justice* to mobilize the best theologians and moralists and social scientists of the day, to develop these principles to guide the statesmen of the world. But not only these ; to be practical, the co-operation of the world's best specialists in economics, agriculture, international law, history, technology etc. is also being sought.

In the meantime, however, without precisely determining the nature of our obligations and the concrete way in which they should be carried out, it is obvious that the Christian religion gives us every incentive to throw ourselves heart and soul into this Campaign for the relief—stable and permanent—of conditions in parts of the world which are a disgrace to our so-prosperous material civilization. The Atlantic peoples who, on the whole, are the most favoured are also the Christian nations with the heritage of Christian principles and civilization, even where religious practice has declined or is even denied. The very humanism that for agnostics and unbelievers is often a substitute for religion owes much to the spiritual capital of Christianity. Centuries of paganism would not have produced the ' good pagan '. Men like Sir Julian Huxley himself, in spite of his denial of the necessity of the God-hypothesis, would hardly have emerged or flourished in an atmosphere where Christian values were not respected.

The teaching of the Popes can therefore be a powerful spur to action : we must not wait until we know to the last iota what international social justice obliges us to. The general import of Pope Pius XII's teaching would put us in the van of those who recognize that they are their brothers' keepers on a threefold basis : justice, charity, prudence.

Ireland Through German Eyes

1844-1957

THE TRAVEL-DIARIES OF JAKOB VENEDEY AND HEINRICH BÖLL

by H. R. KLIENEBERGER

GERMAN intellectuals have through the centuries been noted for their openness to the wider world beyond the national horizon, their readiness to enter with intense sympathy and understanding into foreign ways of life and cultural traditions. Many Germans have, indeed, carried this tendency so far that devotion to this or that foreign civilization has taken the place, for them, of attachment to their own country and people.

> What is it that binds me
> To those ancient blessed shores,
> That I should love them
> More, even, than my fatherland ?

asked Hölderlin in the opening lines of his late hymn ' Der Einzige ', with reference to Greece. For it was towards ancient Greece that the German intellectual's longing for an ideal society was directed in the classical era of German literature in the later eighteenth century. It has been assumed that this nostalgia had its origin in a radical dissatisfaction with the Philistinism, the narrowness and rigid social conventions in the Germany of the petty principalities. But if it is true that the German classicists' picture of the greatness and nobility of the ancients was largely an imaginary construction, men such as Winckelmann and Goethe thought they had found in the climate and landscape of modern Italy, with its many reminders of a classical past, and the energy and passionate spontaneity of its people, a contemporary embodiment of their ideal. In the course of the nineteenth century several German writers, of whom the poet Platen and the philosopher Nietzsche are perhaps the best-known, went to live in Italy : they had felt isolated and misunderstood at home, and extolled the Mediterranean South in their writings at the expense of their own country. Others, as for instance Heinrich Heine, who had fled to Paris from the reactionary Germany of the post-Napoleonic era, discovered affinities with the French. And more recently when ' Nordic romanticism ' was in vogue, a cult of the Scandinavian countries obtained among some sections of the

educated German public. It is perhaps less well-known that Ireland, too, has occasionally figured in German cultural history as a focal point for idealistic aspirations of this kind. The two German writers of whom one could, with some justification, say that they loved Ireland ' more even than their fatherland ', are the nineteenth century publicist Jakob Venedey and the twentieth century novelist Heinrich Böll.

Jakob Venedey, whose *Irland* in two volumes was published in 1844, was born in Cologne, at a time when that city formed part of the Rhenish province of the French Republic. His father had been a prominent member of the Franco-German republican movement, but resigned his civic offices when Napoleon became emperor, and finally withdrew from public life in 1815, when, on the defeat of Napoleon, the Rhineland became part of the kingdom of Prussia. Venedey attended the universities of Bonn and Heidelberg in the eighteen-twenties and distinguished himself in the liberal students' corporations which were dedicated to the establishment of a democratic and united Germany. In 1832 he was arrested on a charge of sedition, but escaped from prison and settled in France. He became the editor of a Parisian political monthly and published several historical studies which earned him a reputation as a scholar. He spent half a year in England in the early eighteen-forties, and from there went to Ireland. The account of his stay there which constitutes the second part of his *Irland* was published by James Duffy in Dublin in 1844 under the title *Ireland and the Irish during the Repeal Year, 1843*; the translation is by W. B. McCabe.

Venedey returned to Germany in 1848, the year of the liberal revolution, and sat on the German National Assembly which had met at Frankfort to draft a constitution for a united German state. As the deputy for Hessen-Homburg, he became the acknowledged leader of the moderate left. But when the efforts of the Assembly, and of German liberalism, were defeated by the antagonism of the Austrian and Prussian governments, Venedey retired once more to historical research and political journalism. He opposed Bismarck's policy of furthering German unity without a corresponding advance in representative government, but was nevertheless, to his great joy, offered a seat in the Reichstag of the newly created German Empire in 1871. He died shortly afterwards.

If his visit to Ireland had proved so profound an emotional experience for Venedey, it was, as he himself emphasizes, because there he met warmth of heart, kindness and hospitality again after ten lonely years of exile, and that among people who were fighting and suffering in the same cause of freedom, for which he had sacrificed his home and happiness : his experiences in Ireland, he asserts, were such as to restore his faith both in human nature and in divine providence.

Heinrich Böll whose *Irisches Tagebuch* was published in 1957—he had spent four months in each of the preceding three years in Ireland

—is not, like Venedey, a politician and journalist, but a literary artist, a novelist; but he, too, was born and bred in Cologne and shares with Venedey a liberal and humane outlook on life, traditional in the Rhineland. His early novels are set in German-occupied Eastern Europe in the last year of the war; they are harshly realistic and expose the helplessness, fear and misery of the individuals caught up in the war-machine, whether they are German conscripts or Polish and Hungarian civilians. It is a world of impersonal malice, thinly camouflaged with patriotic and other ideological clichés, in which relief and significance are provided only by occasional manifestations of genuine human emotion and unexpected glimpses of Catholic piety, prayer and self-denial. In his later novels Böll deals ironically with aspects of Germany's 'economic miracle'; the frantic struggle now for a 'higher standard of living' is seen as a form of blind self-assertion, not altogether different in quality from the Nazis' fight for living-space. Böll finds true worth, generosity and charity more often in those who are not interested in 'making good', in outsiders and social failures even, who have resisted the pressure of society on them to conform; the successful, in these novels, even when they are practising Christians, are usually guilty of self-deception, smugness and Pharisaism. Böll is attracted to Ireland because there men seem not yet to be dedicated to the single-minded pursuit of social status, wealth and economic efficiency, but are still capable of enjoying the present moment and have time to think of the past and to remember the dead. '"The churchyards are full of people without whom the world could not live." This wisdom alone'—it is an aphorism which Böll chances upon in an issue of the Irish Digest—'seemed to me to be worth a journey to Dublin.'[1]

Stylistically the diaries of Venedey and Böll are, of course, poles apart; Venedey's is a matter-of-fact account of his experiences and observations in the somewhat stilted idiom of the mid-19th century, where Böll's is a poetic style, subtly registering atmosphere and symbolic associations. There is no suggestion that the diary of the one has been influenced by that of the other, and yet there are parallels and resemblances which are perhaps worth examining more closely.

Both Venedey and Böll feel, as soon as they are on board the night-boat from Liverpool to Dublin, that they have crossed a frontier. Venedey who talks to a girl who is sitting next to him, is impressed by the ease and liveliness of her conversation 'as free from reserve as if we had been acquainted for many years';[2] he marvels that one as intelligent and versatile as she is, should be at the same time so completely innocent

[1] B. p. 22.—Heinrich Böll, *Irisches Tagebuch*. Köln, Kiepenheuer & Witsch, 1957. [The passages quoted have been translated by the author of this article.]

[2] V. p. 5.—Jakob Venedey, *Ireland and the Irish during the Repeal Year, 1843*. From the German . . . Translated and with notes, by William Bernard McCabe. Dublin, James Duffy. 1844.

and ingenuous. Later he realizes that in this respect she was representative of her fellow-countrymen, ' a perfect type of Irish amiability and confidingness in disposition '.[1] A hundred years later Heinrich Böll, who spends the night in an arm-chair in the general lounge of the boat, concludes that the social order of Europe is no longer valid here, as he watches the unselfconscious mingling of classes—workmen, priests, nuns, businessmen, tramps—around him. He seemed to have entered a sphere where poverty was no longer ' a disgrace ', where wealth no longer constituted the criterion of social self-esteem.

Both authors are distressed, at first, by the incidence of begging in Dublin, to which they are not accustomed in Germany and which seems to them out of place in a northern climate. Even an ' incorrigible aesthete', says Böll, 'could not feel that begging in the rain is ' picturesque '.[2] But Venedey, who in 1843 is exposed to very much more of it than is Böll in the nineteen-fifties—he passes ' legions of the destitute, in rags and tatters '—finds on closer acquaintance that Irish beggars are not at all dejected and embarrassed as he had expected them to be. They are, in fact, generally interesting people, of diverse backgrounds, in no way impaired in their human dignity by the way of life they are compelled to lead. His experiences with one of them are indeed so happy, that he confesses : ' The intelligent, the merry, the heaven-confiding beggar brought back to me that confidence and consolation of which England had nearly deprived me.'[3] And Böll, too, relates an incident involving a beggar which he had found strangely moving. Outside St Patrick's Cathedral he had noticed a man who had lost his arms : the wet and dirty sleeves of his jacket were empty, and his face which was rather beautiful, twitched from time to time like that of an epileptic. Later he meets the same beggar in the Catholic pro-Cathedral and is amazed to find him emptying his pockets, with the help of a school-boy who seemed to know him, into the collection-box. Böll also notices that people generally here don't look aghast at a man in such a condition or shrink away from him, as they might in other countries.

It is Venedey who witnesses the circumstances in which Irish begging originated and acquired its peculiar character. The ragged hordes swarming through Dublin and the Irish countryside are for the most part evicted peasants, or peasants who in a lean year cannot keep their family from starving without resorting to seasonal begging. ' The man thus reduced to beggary, travels through the country, until the time for employment returns ; he then comes back to his home, and toils, and lives upon what he has earned, as long as it will last.'[4]

[1] V. p. 5.
[2] B. p. 26.
[3] V. p. viii-ix.
[4] V. p. 224.

The beggar can always count upon charity from the peasants who are still occupying land, however poor they might be. Venedey draws on the report of the 1835 Poor Law Commissioners to supplement his observations. He relates how one of the English Commissioners 'having asked : "How many potatoes do you give away at a time ?" the Irishman answered—"I hope God has reckoned them, but I am sure I did not." But being further interrogated, "how it was that the peasant, who was himself so poor, could thus give away potatoes without reckoning them ?" the reply was, "There cannot be the slightest doubt, but that many of those who give charity can very badly afford it ; but God gives it to them again. What the willing hand gives, the kind heart never misses." Thus it is that the peasant—be he farmer, or labourer, gives charity until want at last reaches him, and it too frequently occurs that he is forced to beg, like those to whom he gave.'[1] Against this background it is understandable that, traditionally, begging in Ireland is not, as in England and elsewhere, the unspeakable activity that makes those who engage in it outcasts from society.

Both Venedey and Böll try to portray the landscape which provides the setting for the human occurrences in which they are principally interested. And if there is perhaps too much conventional description of scenery in his book, Venedey does occasionally forsake 19th century guide-book idiom to express directly the impact on him of Irish lakes, mountains and moors. 'How Ireland can have absentees is, I must own, a perfect puzzle to me. The people are better here than they are generally to be found elsewhere, and the country itself is so exquisitely beautiful, that noble lords and rich proprietors must find it exceedingly difficult, with all the expenses of travelling, to discover anything to equal it, even in the finest parts of Europe.'[2]

Venedey was, of course, writing at a time when Irish scenery had not yet been exploited in the interest of the tourist-trade. Böll, a hundred years later, cannot help being conscious of commercialization. When he sees an American camera-man filming an 88 year-old fisherman in a Tartan costume against the setting sun on an island in the Shannon, he comments sadly : 'It is the same with folklore as it is with naivety : if one knows that one has got it, one hasn't got it any more.'[3] It is for this reason that Böll, feeling perhaps that enough has been written about the scenic charms of Ireland, pays sympathetic attention to some less immediately prepossessing aspects of its landscape.

'The rain here is absolute, grandiose and frightening . . . It reminds us emphatically that its element is water, falling water. And water is

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[1] V. p. 223-224.
[2] V. p. 197.
[3] B. p. 133.

hard.'[1] The train by which Böll is travelling to Sligo, to visit Yeats's grave, seems to 'crawl through clouds of water'; the rain splashes against the window-panes, and outside there are lakes, rivers, brooks, and more lakes, and some flooded fields in which farmers are paddling and fishing their hay together in nets. Drumcliff churchyard is deserted except for the crows which circle overhead, croaking scornfully. At the sight of the cold, wet stone on Yeats's grave with its inscription

> Cast a cold eye
> On life, on death.
> Horseman, pass by!

Böll feels a cold shiver running down his spine. This had happened to him before, at Swift's tomb: St. Patrick's cathedral had been so clean, so empty of life, with the desperate Dean and Stella 'so deep under the cold stone.'[2] He had felt as though he was being shot at with needles of ice.

'Yes, Ireland is green, very green, but her green is not only the green of meadows, but the green of moss . . . and moss is the plant of resignation, of dereliction', writes Böll.[3] Both Venedey and Böll comment on the number of deserted and ruined houses in Ireland. In Germany, when a house is abandoned, it is pulled down straight away, but not here. 'On any two hours' walk', writes Böll, 'one can count them: this was deserted ten, that twenty, that fifty or eighty years ago.'[4] On one occasion Böll finds an entire village in ruins, a ghost-village; no one knows when or why it was abandoned. A naturalistic painting of this village, with sheep grazing between the ruins and a bare-footed girl carrying turf down the main street, would be taken for a surrealist phantasy; so phantastic is reality here.

Venedey, travelling in 1843 by jaunting-car through Roscommon was astonished by the same phenomenon: 'Within two English miles, on one side of the country (that only which I could look at, as being opposite the side of the car on which I sat), I counted fourteen ruins—the ruins either of churches, or towers, or farms, or houses . . . As far as I have yet seen of Ireland, it seems to me that there is one ruin for every ten houses.'[5]

Eviction, famine and emigration were transforming the Irish social scene in Venedey's time. No one is starving to-day, but in his travels in the West of Ireland, Böll witnesses too many tearful farewells at bus-stops and railway-stations, not to regret the tragedy of emigration

[1] B. p. 81.
[2] B. p. 25.
[3] B. p. 38.
[4] B. p. 50.
[5] V. p. 23.

in contemporary Ireland. Mrs D., Böll's landlady in Mayo, has nine children, four or five of whom will have to emigrate ; this prospect does not seem to worry her, any more than it does the children. ' The present here has more weight than the future ', comments Böll, ' but this preponderance, the consequence of which is improvisation instead of planning, is counterbalanced by tears.'[1]

Venedey, in his day, believed fervently in a political solution ; in fact he thought, like his Irish hosts, that Repeal of the Union, leading to a reform of the system of land-tenure in Ireland, would usher in a new and happier era, and that O'Connell was, what his disciples described him as being, the latter-day Moses, who would lead his people to the promised land. It was the fame of O'Connell that had originally drawn Venedey to Ireland. But it seems that the reality of O'Connell's ' charm and greatness of soul ' altogether exceeded his expectations, and his book represents, in part, an effort to comprehend and account for the phenomenon of O'Connell's fascination.

Venedey first meets the Liberator at a giant Repeal meeting at Athlone, and is astonished by the authority which he exercises over a crowd of some hundred thousands by means of a rhetorical skill, as conscious and controlled as that of an actor ; but although O'Connell is able to stand back from his own performance and comment on it objectively and shrewdly, Venedey does not doubt the passionate sincerity of the man ; an apparent contradiction. But Venedey responds to the complexity of O'Connell's character, and discovers that the Irishman combines in himself qualities which the German is accustomed to regard as mutually exclusive. Venedey is surprised, for instance, that a man of such strong and deeply earnest feeling as O'Connell is yet capable of playful wit, humour and apparent frivolity, and should succeed also in combining intellectual sophistication with the common touch and unfailing human warmth, and an excitable and impulsive disposition with an ability to keep ultimate political ends constantly in view and pursue them with patience and diplomatic finesse. And most wonderful of all, in Venedey's view : in spite of his eminence and tremendous power over people, O'Connell refuses to take himself solemnly and scrupulously avoids acting dictatorially, but inculcates tolerance of Protestants and political minorities, and deliberately permits criticism of his policies, even in the press controlled by himself and his Association. But the Irish, Venedey observes, are naturally a democratic people, more so than Englishmen or Continental Europeans ; and O'Connell, in this as in other respects, is for Venedey the embodiment of the Irish character. He is representatively Irish, too, in his sturdy piety ; and Venedey convincingly refutes the charge, brought by the more extreme nationalists, that O'Connell's unyielding stand for non-

[1] B. p. 127.

violence could be due to any baser motive than that of Christian principle.

In addition to hearing O'Connell speak in public at Athlone and Tara, and in private at the headquarters of the Repeal Association in Dublin, Venedey takes dinner at O'Connell's house a couple of times and on one occasion accompanies O'Connell and his family on an excursion to Dalkey Island. The dinners—O'Connell is surrounded by numerous sons, daughters, sons-in-law and dozens of grandchildren—' had quite the character of a patriarchal family-scene ';[1] the feast on Dalkey Island is attended by Tom Steele, the secretary of the Repeal Association, and a few other political figures, in addition to the O'Connell family. Tom Steele, in a speech full of ' comic pathos ' suggested the restoration of the Kingdom of Dalkey. ' Mr Morgan O'Connell, if I mistake not, proposed Mr Fitzpatrick as king, who on the spot, and without much ceremony, was saluted as ' His Majesty '. All his subjects drank to his health, in answer to which he spoke a long and beautiful address—so long ! and so beautiful !—just as if he had been born king of Prussia or of France . . . He said—' As it is the custom, I mean to appoint a prime minister, and he will of course have to do all the business and transact all affairs in my name ! ' He therefore named Daniel O'Connell as his prime minister. All his subjects approved of his choice, and drank to the prosperity of the new government.

O'Connell rose, and delivered a ' short ' speech of thanks, full of jollity and humour, and concluded by nominating on the spot Tom Steele as lord chancellor, and this because he, of all present and beyond dispute, knew not the smallest particle of law ! Tom Steele then returned thanks in another speech, and declared his intention to administer law and equity as badly as he possibly could, as was the duty of a real and genuine lord chancellor . . . I had the honour of being appointed Home Secretary, by right of my being a foreigner ; and I declared, in gratitude, my fitness to fill the place, as I was to quit the shore of Ireland in about eight days . . . There reigned the most indescribable fun and jollity that it is possible to conceive. Man and wife, old and young, grandfather and grandchild, all mingled and played gaily together . . .'[2]

But Venedey notes with surprise, that, after the ladies had retired, the men ' all became instantly serious, and five minutes afterwards the company was engaged in an earnest political conversation'.[3] So he takes the opportunity of raising the subject of Irish-German relations, and asks O'Connell why he and his supporters when they spoke of Ireland's foreign sympathizers, referred invariably to the Americans and the French, and occasionally to the Spaniards, but never to the

[1] V. p. 143.
[2] V. p. 149-150.
[3] V. p. 151.

Germans. O'Connell's reply is to the effect that this was so partly because Germany seemed geographically more remote than these other countries and partly because of the apparent eclipse of liberalism in Germany after the abortive revolution of 1832. This gives Venedey an opportunity for enlightening the party on the political problems of central Europe, and inspiring O'Connell with what, he thinks, is a juster and more sympathetic view of Germany.

On other occasions, too, Venedey is taken aback by the ignorance of Irish people about Germany. He cites, for instance, the case of a peasant-woman in Ulster whom he asks whether there were many Repealers in her part of the country. ' She answered, " Oh yes ! a great many " ; and then added, inquiringly, " And a great many too, I suppose, in Germany ? " '[1]

In Dublin and elsewhere, Venedey is invariably taken for a Frenchman, for to the man in the street, the words ' foreigner ' and ' Frenchman ' are synonymous. And the French are very popular, being thought of as the enemies of England, with the Napoleonic wars still fresh in peoples' minds ; and indeed it is rumoured, in the summer of 1843, that French officers in disguise are in the country to drill the peasantry for a rising against England. During his stay in Dublin, Venedey, to his amusement, finds himself repeatedly watched and followed by police-agents.

It is curious that Venedey does not appear anxious to meet fellow-countrymen of his in Ireland. When he passes a group of Germans in Powerscourt Park one day, he doesn't introduce himself to them. ' My companion . . . was astonished, that here in a foreign land, so far away from home, I would not *sans ceremonie* address them. He was an Irishman, and he did not consider that I was now in the eleventh year of my wanderings, during which I had hundreds upon hundreds of times come in contact with Germans, that it had been better I had never met ; and conversed with some, that it had been more lucky I had never spoken to . . .'[2]

Böll too is not fortunate in his contacts with fellow-Germans abroad. On his very first day in Ireland he finds himself ' passionately defending ' the country against a German ' who declared categorically : " Here everything is dirty, everything is expensive, and you won't get a real cutlet anywhere " '.[3]

The Irish are, in the nineteen-fifties, much better informed about Germany than they had been in the eighteen-forties. Böll indeed finds, to his profound embarrassment, that Germany now figures in the minds of some Irishmen merely as the heroic adversary of England—as France

[1] V. p. 282.
[3] V. p. 220.
[2] B. p. 22.

did a hundred years earlier. ' You know, I think Hitler wasn't all that bad really, only he went a bit too far ', is the sort of remark made to him time and time again over a pint of beer in pubs up and down Ireland. One Padraic, in Mayo, actually brushes aside Böll's protests and says to him : ' Pity that you too have been taken in by British propaganda '. This so thoroughly rouses Böll that he delivers a full-length lecture : Hitler was . . . Hitler did . . . Hitler said . . . It is as painful for Padraic as a dental operation ; but the bad tooth had to come out. And Padraic is sad, ' " because now I don't know any longer why I like the Germans so much ". You must like them, I said quietly, not because of Hitler, but in spite of him . . . If your grandfather was a burglar, and you get to know somebody who finds you terribly nice because your grandfather was a burglar, that's embarrassing . . .[1] On another occasion Böll, who became famous in Germany as a scathing critic of German nationalism and militarism, is actually congratulated on his presumed war-record, and that by a man who has evidently been reared on myths about Rommel and German exploits in Russia, and insists on taking Böll's firm disavowals for mere false modesty, but in the most amiable manner imaginable.

Both Venedey and Böll are in no doubt as to the amiability, the good nature of Irish people. ' In France ', writes Venedey, ' months had passed away before I became reconciled to the strange society into which I had fallen. I was half a year in London, and I do not suppose that there it would be ever possible for me to feel myself at home, whilst in Ireland two days were sufficient to remove from me the impression that I dwelt amongst strangers.[2] Wherever Venedey goes, people open their homes to him and get their entire family to make him welcome. ' I do most firmly believe, that there is not upon the face of the earth a more hospitable people than the Irish. I cannot entertain the notion how it is possible for persons to be more hospitable than they are '.[3] And 'the hospitality of the Irishman comes from the heart and goes to the heart. He shares with you that which he has, and with all this you have an open, friendly, kindly word and manner, to make it doubly welcome.'[4]

In England Venedey was stared at in the street and treated as an oddity because of his moustaches, foreign clothes and demeanour ; but here these things are scarcely remarked upon and certainly do not constitute a barrier between himself and the Irish, such is their tolerance. And Venedey relates the tremendous sense of human solidarity of Irish people to the grinding oppression which they have endured. He

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[1] B. p. 54-55.
[2] V. p. 67.
[3] V. p. 106.
[4] V. p. 67.

considers as characteristic an incident he had witnessed at the Tara Repeal meeting. The crowd had been so closely packed that it seemed impossible to move through it, but he noticed a small unoccupied space in it, slowly moving nearer. When it had come quite close, he saw in the centre of it a cripple : the open space was formed by people making way for the cripple as he moved along. Such consideration would not be shown by a crowd in any other country. Reflecting on this and other experiences, Venedey concludes : ' I might indeed cry out from the roof tops of Dublin, to all who have honest hearts, and have suffered by the cruel blows of destiny, to come to Ireland, and they will find there men, generous and good, to comfort, to console and to assuage their pain, and there too, they will be sure to meet with women so pure of heart . . . that they see nothing wrong in giving willingly a kind and helping hand to the stranger, and teaching him to forget . . . that he has suffered wrong, encountered disaster, and known misfortune.'[1]

' Mild ' and ' gentle ' are recurrent epithets in Venedey with reference to Irish manners. The so-called ' agrarian murders ' which, he says, English critics cite as evidence of the alleged violence and lawlessness of the Irish, are isolated acts of vengeance by desperate peasants, and would under similar circumstances be more frequent elsewhere. Burglary and theft are so rare, in spite of the prevalence of destitution, that, as a Protestant clergyman informs him, no country-gentleman ever thinks of bolting his door. Highway robbery is unknown, and, at the time Venedey is writing his book, the life of the traveller is much more secure in Ireland than it is in England or on the Continent.

Böll is impressed by the same phenomenon, and wonders at the gentleness of the people he meets at night in the slums of Limerick. ' My companion trembled ; he succumbed to the most bitter and most stupid of all prejudices : that people who are poorly dressed, are dangerous, more dangerous, in any case, than the well-dressed. He ought to tremble at least as much in the bar of the Shelbourne Hotel in Dublin as here, behind King John's Castle in Limerick. Oh, if only they were more dangerous, these ragged poor, if only they were as dangerous as those who look so harmless in the bar of the Shelbourne Hotel '.[2] And he relates one or two anecdotes illustrating the patience, the submissiveness, the resignation of the poor of Limerick.

And the Irish are always ready for fresh human contacts, while elsewhere men no longer have time for others, and indeed exclude strangers and outsiders from their lives for fear of the emotional re-adjustment this might involve, a phenomenon referred to in England as ' protecting one's privacy '. But the apparent openness of Irish people

[1] V. p. 109.
[2] B. p. 67.

to new challenges and encounters, gives them an inestimable spiritual advantage. Venedey insists : If the Irish have time on their hands, this is not due to laziness. There is much unemployment, much enforced idleness in Ireland ; and, in the words of the proverb, ' when nought is to be done, there is no use in hurrying '. In England and America the Irish emigrants are renowned for their industriousness. But, ' " Ye are idle, ye are idle ", is said by those very persons who live in luxury in London, Paris or Rome upon the sweat and blood of this noble people '.[1] Both Venedey and Böll notice that unpunctuality is general, but that people are not worried about the ensuing delays and uncertainties. ' When God made time, He made plenty of it ', they say ; and Böll goes on to a philosophical defence of this Irish proverb. ' If one conceives of time ', he writes, ' as a substance which has been placed at our disposal for the dispatch of our earthly concerns, then we have undoubtedly plenty of it, for there is always " time left ". He who has no time, is a monster, an abortion : somewhere he is stealing time, embezzling it. (How much time had to be frittered away, how much had to be stolen, in order to make that unjustly renowned " military punctuality " into a catchword : thousand millions of stolen hours are the price of that wasteful form of punctuality, and as for those contemporary abortions, who have no time ! I always think of them as of people who have too little skin) . . . In the use of time both waste and thrift are undoubtedly operative ; and, paradoxically, the time-wasters are the thrifty-ones, for they have always time, when a claim is made on their time, to take someone quickly to the railway-station or to the hospital; just as one can always touch a spendthrift for money, so the time-wasters are the savings-banks in whom God conceals His time and holds it in reserve, in case some is suddenly needed, which one of those who are short of time, has spent in the wrong place.'[2]

And by a turf-fire in a cottage deep in the Irish country-side the political and economic issues of the day lose their importance and interest, and fall into perspective. ' The time between five o'clock and midnight is so quickly devoured by the calm flame of the fire ; people talk quietly to one another ; he who would shout here, can only be one of two things : sick or ridiculous. Here by the fire one can play truant from the school of Europe.'[3]

Both authors respond sensitively, if in rather different ways, to what Böll calls the 'impression of the overwhelming piety' of Ireland.[4] Like most Continental liberals of his time, Venedey was accustomed to look on the Church as a bulwark of autocracy and to assume that

[1] V. p. 232.
[2] B. p. 74-75.
[3] B. p. 111.
[4] B. p. 21.

political freedom and ' free-thinking ' would progress in unison. He was therefore compelled to revise his opinions when he came to Ireland. He recognises that religion had in Ireland become inextricably bound up with the sense of national identity during the centuries when manifestations of Catholicism and of Irish patriotism were alike persecuted by the foreign invader. And he acknowledges that in Ireland the clergy are not, as on the Continent, allies of the traditional ruling-class and in conflict with the rising forces of democracy, but, on the contrary, on the side of the people in the national struggle against an oppressive Protestant aristocracy and government. This enables him to see Catholicism with new eyes, and though he has still some reservations, (for which, incidentally, his translator, McCabe, takes him to task in a series of foot-notes,) his attitude to Catholicism as practised in Ireland is wholly positive by the time he leaves the country.

He is not, however, spared some embarrassing moments. When people asked him whether he was a Catholic, he replied ' that I was born one, but that I was a bad Catholic'.[1] A man who refused to take these words at their face-value, but politely interpreted them as expressing true Christian modesty, later remarked, with reference to the French, that ' lukewarm Catholics are not a bit better, nay, they are even worse than heretics and pagans.'[2] But every day brings fresh evidence of the excellence of Irish priests and the sturdy faith of the laity ; and one morning while hearing Mass in Dublin's pro-Cathedral, Venedey is smitten with so intense a sympathy for the devout people around him, that his childhood faith suddenly revives, and he too is able to pray again. A social psychologist may see in this merely an illustration of the effect of group-suggestion ; but the experience seems to have left a permanent mark on Venedey. For in a generalizing passage further on in his diary, he states explicitly : ' In Ireland I saw millions of people, the old and the young, the rich and the poor, the high and the low, in pure sincerity of faith, bow down to the earth, and pray for the safety and future happiness of the nation ; and that sight brought me too to my knees—yes, even though I might often have doubted in my fatherland, yet here I could doubt no longer . . .'[3]

Böll is a practising Catholic, but as a representative of the modern school of Catholic novelists who combine theological orthodoxy with a highly critical attitude towards the visible Church, his response to Irish Catholicism is an ambivalent one. He, too, describes sympathetically the social scene in the pro-Cathedral and the intensity with which people of all ages and classes join in the devotions ; and if the statues and décor are not always to his taste, he knows that the recording angel

[1] V. p. 57.
[2] V. p. 58.
[3] V. p. 192.

does not differentiate ' between those who pray here in front of trash, and those who prayed in Italy under the frescoes of Fra Angelico '.[1] On his first Sunday morning in Dublin he had been astonished by the size of the crowd pouring out of St. Andrew's Church, Westland Row, after the 8 o'clock Mass ; in Germany ' so many people would be seen coming out of church only at Christmas or on Easter Sunday'.[2] But he reports a conversation which he had overheard on the Liverpool-Dublin boat the night before, between a priest and a girl from Galway. She had been working as a waitress in London and lost her faith ; but when she is home on holiday, she never misses Mass, for her parents' sake. And she is unmoved by the patient expostulations of the priest ; she has heard them before. ' I myself have a brother who is a priest, and two cousins : they are the only ones among all my relations who have a car.'[3] She is bitter about unemployment and emigration, and sneers at Holy Ireland. ' I have been a waitress in London for two years . . . I have seen how many loose girls Kathleen ni Houlihan has supplied to London . . .'[4]

And yet it is the manifest innocence of Irish girls that impresses Böll, and their smiling charm, to which Venedey, too, had been rather susceptible. But if Venedey interrupts his narrative repeatedly to enthuse about this or that girl he has met, he leaves us in no doubt about her virtue. Indeed he states categorically that in Ireland ' the mass of the people are in the highest degree moral, and the women are more modest than they are to be found in any other part of the world.'[5] Such vice as is to be found, takes the form of excessive drinking and gambling.

Venedey argues that the peasants find in these forms of diversion their sole gratification, since all chances of self-improvement by work and administrative action are denied them by the Anglo-Irish system of land-tenure. But drinking and gambling are still prevalent to-day, and the sceptical observer would say that much of the intense religious devotion of the Irish, too, is only another means by which they obtain compensation in phantasy for the inadequacies of life. Böll is no sceptic, but he remembers that Ireland is renowned not only for its contribution to English drama, but holds the world-record in cinema-attendance, as he watches the long queues outside Dublin's numerous cinemas. ' In the morning, . . . they crowd inside and in front of the churches, in the evening evidently inside and in front of the cinemas.'[6] And in his impressionistic sketch of Limerick he describes a dreamlike merging of these diverse elements. ' Purple Cloud [the favourite in next day's

[1] B. p. 30.
[2] B. p. 21.
[3] B. p. 14.
[4] V. p. 164.
[5] B. p. 13.
[6] B. p. 23.

races] must win. The large Heart of Jesus shone purple in the church in which the evening devotions were already over .... Black beer flows to the health of Purple Cloud, which will not win. Streets ... flooded with those who come from evening devotions ... Who will count the prayers, who the curses, and who has the Geiger-counter which might register the hopes, centring this night on Purple Cloud ? ... And if Purple Cloud does not win, then grief must be quenched with as much dark beer as was needed to nourish hope ...'[41]

It is obvious that for Böll, though he does not state it explicitly, the association of piety in Ireland with various more mundane forms of diversion, does not prove religion false, nor does he see in the practices which he describes an abuse of religion. The sceptic would say that they are grounded in superstitious illusion ; but Böll has learned that the modern world's alternative to religion, the calculating pursuit of a higher standard of living, is undoubtedly illusory, in that it cannot provide the happiness which men expect from it. Religious devotion, on the other hand, nourishes the imagination, the inner life ; and the satisfactions of drink and gambling may be morally less harmful than the competitive struggle for power and success, in which the ' respectable ' engage. If one accepts Böll's impression as valid, one is led to conclude that to the extent to which the ' progressive spirit ' has not yet taken root here, Ireland is a happier and a better country.

Of course it is true that men find what they look for ; and we have noted at the outset that Germany has in every generation produced writers who explore the world, determined to find somewhere an ideal counterpart to their own environment. Venedey in particular can be accused of simplicity and one-sidedness—as, indeed, he was, by none other than Thackeray, in a review of the *Irland*, which appeared in the *Morning Chronicle* of 16 March 1844, reprinted in G.N. Ray's *Thackeray's contributions to the Morning Chronicle,* 1955. In Thackeray's opinion Venedey is unjust to England and idealizes Ireland, and casts the two nations in the roles of villain and heroine. But subjective though Venedey and Böll may be, they have as newcomers to the Irish scene, a freshness and intensity of vision, and, as outsiders, a detachment, which enables them to describe aspects of the country of which someone who has always lived there, or, across the channel, in close proximity to it, might never become conscious. And so they provide a corrective to the writings of those Irish men of letters who have achieved success and fame in England or America by portraying their country as backward, frustrated and priest-ridden. For the alleged failings of Ireland, which these critics deplore, may be the condition of her virtue. If they, or, for that matter, those ' forward-looking ' Irishmen who want to turn Ireland into a prosperous and efficient

[41] B. p. 70-71.

modern state, have their way, it is not certain that the traditional virtues of the Irish would long survive : that piety, resignation and wise indifference to the clock, that reverence for the past and for the dead, that freedom from pompousness and self-importance, that gay zest and imaginativeness, and, above all, that overwhelming sense of human solidarity, to which Venedey and Böll responded with admiration and love.

Wallace Stevens and the Abstract

by DENIS DONOGHUE

IN one of his later poems Wallace Stevens speaks to an old philosopher moving toward death : the sounds of Christian bells drift into the convent where the philosopher sits in his ambered room :

> The bells keep on repeating solemn names
> In choruses and choirs of choruses,
> Unwilling that mercy should be a mystery
> Of silence, that any solitude of sense
> Should give you more than their peculiar chords
> And reverberations clinging to whisper still.[1]

A solitude of sense : even if we think of this as a withdrawal from the full sensory commitment to chords and whispers, and therefore call it an abstraction, it is an abstraction which has preserved an umbilical connexion with sense. So it is ' impure ', either less than an abstraction or greater, depending upon one's point of view. And if we place it upon earth, we must allow it a degree of radiance which many would consider unearthly. For Stevens in his later years it was the sum of human desire, an absolute moment, the common quest of poet and philosopher.

As a young poet Stevens had been satisfied with much less, with Kant's ' intuitions of sensibility '. The poet of *Harmonium* is satisfied with the dynamic apprehension of *sensibilia*, the dreadful sundry of the world (' The Ordinary Women ' ; ' Ploughing on Sunday ' ; ' Fabliau of Florida ' ; ' The Bird with the Coppery, Keen Claws ' ; ' Life is Motion '), with ' the immense dew of Florida ' (' Nomad Exquisite ' ; ' Bowl '.) These apprehensions are gay, innocent, and rich enough to provide dependable satisfactions ; even the bleak ones are good for their own lives. Stevens commits himself to their priority, and he pities anyone—like the woman in ' The Old Woman and the Statue '—who is a stranger to their local accords :

> The golden clouds that turned to bronze, the sounds
> Descending, did not touch her eye and left
> Her ear unmoved. She was that tortured one,
> So destitute that nothing but herself
> Remained and nothing of herself except
> A fear too naked for her shadow's shape.[2]

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[1] *Collected Poems* (London : Faber and Faber, 1955) p. 510.
[2] *Opus Posthumous* (New York : Knopf, 1957) p. 44.

Harmonium does not give the definitive truth of Stevens, but some of its motives, as we might expect, were to persist into his last poems, rooted in his poetic creed. We string a few of them together here, for convenience : ' The real is only the base. But it is the base '. (' Adagia '.) ' The greatest poverty is not to live / In a physical world, to feel that one's desire / Is too difficult to tell from despair '. (' Esthétique du Mal.') And this from the same poem :

> To lose sensibility, to see what one sees,
> As if sight had not its own miraculous thrift,
> To hear only what one hears, one meaning alone,
> As if the paradise of meaning ceased
> To be paradise, it is this to be destitute.

For the young poet the private and sometimes eccentric satisfactions of sensibility often had the effect of fending off other insights, other ' ways ' into experience through the other faculties : sensibility was enough. It was like first love, with the same ruthless largesse. And like first love it prompted the poet to believe that these local satisfactions of sense, these ' pale coherences of moon and mood ', were the ultimate meaning of experience, or all the meaning there could be. Hence the tendency to look askance at any recourse to ' higher ' levels of experience which might offer a rebuke to the sense. In ' Homunculus et la Belle Etoile ', thinking of the evening star and then of philosophers, Stevens says :

> It might well be that their mistress
> Is no gaunt fugitive phantom.
> She might, after all, be a wanton,
> Abundantly beautiful, eager,
>
> Fecund,
> From whose being by starlight, on sea-coast,
> The innermost good of their seeking
> Might come in the simplest of speech.
>
> It is a good light, then, for those
> That know the ultimate Plato,
> Tranquillizing with this jewel
> The torments of confusion.

It is charming, and no one would have it otherwise, but there is behind it a ' complacency of sense ' which reveals itself at its most provincial in the jaunty rhythms of ' Table-Talk ' :

> One likes what one happens to like.
> One likes the way red grows.
>
> It cannot matter at all.
> Happens to like is one
> Of the ways things happen to fall.

This is not typical of Stevens, but, when we come upon it, it prompts us to look more closely at the gratifications of sense which sustain it ; and then we see that there was something fey as well as fanciful in the experiences. Stevens's commitment to the finite was generous and handsomely endowed, but in some of his early work he seems to assume that anything—any notation of casual appearances—is a poem if you say it is. In ' Earthy Anecdote ' and ' Mandolin and Liqueurs ' the Figure of the Youth as Virile Poet looks alarmingly like Harpo Marx. Perhaps there is nothing to alarm one in the huge eyes of that naif, and we make the conjunction only to emphasize one of the limitations of *Harmonium,* its tendency to purr with self-satisfaction in what can only be the very first stage of insight. As a whole, the book luxuriates too complacently in the blandishments of sense. Certainly we should think rather severely of any poet who would willingly remain at the *Harmonium*-stage all his life, composing more and more Anthologies of Naked Apprehensions. William Carlos Williams evaded this temptation only when he gave himself over to the drama of Paterson ; the poet D. H. Lawrence escaped into the novel ; the poet H. D. did not escape at all.

Stevens escaped—or developed—because he saw that intuitions of sensibility are not everything. He saw that there is an ' impure ' place where the poet and the philosopher meet ; in the habit of forming concepts. The phenomenologist is not enough. For Stevens in ' A Collect of Philosophy ' the habit of forming concepts is a habit of the mind by which it ' probes for an integration ', and the habit of probing for an integration is part of ' the general will to order '. We relate it to Kant's ' concepts of the understanding '. In this phase—call it that for the moment—Stevens tries to bring his intuitions and apprehensions toward a higher level of generalization. In ' Reply to Papini ' it is ' the satisfaction underneath the sense, / The conception sparkling in still obstinate thought '. These satisfactions arise when we revel in the powers of the ' productive imagination '. In ' Imagination as Value ' Stevens glorifies the productive imagination as ' one of the great human powers ', as ' the liberty of the mind ', as ' the only genius '. And he dramatizes its power in the figure of the 'Large Red Man Reading', reading now for those ghosts who have returned to earth to hear his phrases :

> They were those that would have wept to step barefoot into reality,
> That would have wept and been happy, have shivered in the frost
> And cried out to feel it again, have run fingers over leaves
> And against the most coiled thorn, have seized on what was ugly
>
> And laughed, as he sat there reading, from out of the purple tabulae,
> The outlines of being and its expressings, the syllables of its law :
> *Poesis, poesis,* the literal characters, the vatic lines,

> Which in those ears and in those thin, those spended hearts,
> Took on color, took on shape and the size of things as they are
> And spoke the feeling for them, which was what they had lacked.

This comes from *The Auroras of Autumn,* but the large red man first gave systematic readings in *Ideas of Order* and *The Man with the Blue Guitar.* These books are to Stevens what *The Green Helmet* was to Yeats. With this difference ; before *The Green Helmet* Yeats had familiarized himself with the Imagination—or with Fancy, which he mistook for the real thing—while keeping well back from Reality ; before *Ideas of Order* Stevens had immersed himself in Reality, but he had not yet sought the consistent structures of Imagination. Perhaps this is why his versions of Reality in *Harmonium* were so finical, so exotic ; they had to dazzle him lest he notice what was missing. The dance of Imagination and a more virile Reality was to engross him thereafter.

Stevens's notation for this is music. When the person, the *agent,* has an imaginative liaison with his environment, his *scene,* the meaning of things issues as song. In his last poem, ' A Mythology Reflects its Region ', Stevens says :

> The image must be of the nature of its creator.
> It is the nature of its creator increased,
> Heightened. It is he, anew, in a freshened youth
> And it is he in the substance of his region,
> Wood of his forests and stone out of his fields
> Or from under his mountains.

This rooted man of fecund imagination sings, and the song is the form, the order, of his life. In ' The Idea of Order at Key West ', as in ' Esthétique du Mal ', it is specifically a humanist order ; as the speaker separates his heroine from the dark voice of the sea and the outer voice of sky and cloud, he commandeers the universe on her behalf :

> She was the single artificer of the world
> In which she sang. And when she sang, the sea,
> Whatever self it had, became the self
> That was her song, for she was the maker. Then we,
> As we beheld her striding there alone,
> Knew that there never was a world for her
> Except the one she sang and, singing, made.

It is a predatory imagination, this, and the order it imposes, while it is good for the life of the poem, the heroine, and the speaker, gives short shrift to the sea and the sky : if this is what Stevens means by a liaison between the agent and his environment, it is a painfully narrow definition of environment, and therefore of liaison. Stevens will tell us, later and truly, that ' to impose is not / To discover '. And this may account for the unsubstantiality of his current heroine ;

a humanist heroine in full command as *maker* should have a more substantial embodiment than Stevens's singer. She is more substantial when she becomes the man with the blue guitar, and more speculative, less mechanical. The song itself is now not an order imposed, but an order discovered, coaxed through the open spaces between questions and problematic suppositions. And the desired music :

> A tune beyond us as we are,
> Yet nothing changed by the blue guitar ;
>
> Ourselves in the tune as if in space,
> Yet nothing changed, except the place
>
> Of things as they are and only the place
> As you play them, on the blue guitar,
>
> Placed, so, beyond the compass of change,
> Perceived in a final atmosphere ;
>
> For a moment final, in the way
> The thinking of art seems final when
>
> The thinking of god is smoky dew.
> The tune is space. The blue guitar
>
> Becomes the place of things as they are,
> A composing of senses of the guitar.

The ultimate song, which Stevens sings in ' Esthétique du Mal ', is a humanist chorale, a song of exultation, when the metaphysical world itself is harnessed to a *physis* in time and place :

> And out of what one sees and hears and out
> Of what one feels, who could have thought to make
> So many selves, so many sensuous worlds,
> As if the air, the mid-day air, was swarming
> With the metaphysical changes that occur,
> Merely in living as and where we live.

II

We have spoken of two phases in Stevens's work, and we have to consider at some length a third, the poems between ' Notes toward a Supreme Fiction ' and ' A Mythology Reflects its Region '. But these phases are not strict, and it would be pointless to haggle about the dates. Clearly, the eleventh stanza of ' Le Monocle de mon Oncle ' prefigures the ' second ' phase which we posited, and is not at all typical of *Harmonium*. Again, ' Delightful Evening ' would not have surprised us if it had turned up as the first poem of *Harmonium* rather than the last of *Ideas of Order*. But the third phase is a late flower.

The Kantian parallel is still valid. In his third phase the poet's aim is to press his interpretation of experience toward a noumenal or transcendental realm, the presumptive source of empirical facts :

> We shall have gone behind the symbols
> To that which they symbolized, away
> From the rumors of the speech-ful domes,
> To the chatter that is then the true legend,
> Like glitter ascended into fire.

Better still, this from ' Notes toward a Supreme Fiction ' :

> It must be that in time
> The real will from its crude compoundings come,
>
> Seeming, at first, a beast disgorged, unlike,
> Warmed by a desperate milk. To find the real,
> To be stripped of every fiction except one,
>
> The fiction of an absolute—Angel,
> Be silent in your luminous cloud and hear
> The luminous melody of proper sound.

The instrument of such adventures is still, for Stevens, the imagination; what else could it be ? What else is there, for such an honest poet in such a difficult time ? But even with the imagination working at full stretch it will be difficult for him to bring his apprehensions in all their original gaiety and vigour into the supreme fiction which is abstract. And sometimes, very occasionally, he will find relief in moving into pure Platonic abstraction, leaving the world of sense behind :

> In the oblivion of cards
> One exists among pure principles.
>
> Neither the cards nor the trees nor the air
> Persist as facts. This is an escape
>
> To principium, to meditation.
> One knows at last what to think about
>
> And thinks about it without consciousness,
> Under the oak trees, completely released.

This poet is on vacation, playing solitaire under the oaks. We do not hold him severely to account. But some disappointed readers of the later Stevens will accuse him of mere philosophizing, reminding him that—as he warned himself—' the way through the world / Is more difficult to find than the way beyond it '. One part of the answer to such a charge is simply that Stevens, like his Supreme Fiction, ' must change '. A more important part is that Stevens's hope, in those later poems, is to develop a mode of meditation, rooted in sense and empirical fact, and using all the resources of mind and imagination. The hope itself is one of the persistent motifs of his later poems and essays. It is

Canon Aspirin's choice, to include ' the whole, / The complicate, the amassing harmony '. It is ' the reality of the other eye ' in ' The Bouquet ':

> One enters, entering home,
>
> The place of meta-men and para-things,
> And yet still men though meta-men, still things
> Though para-things.

These meta-men ' behold the idea as part / Of the image ' ; like the ballet of Valéry's *Dance and the Soul* in which the Image and the Idea dance and ' unite in the final vertigo '.[3] In ' The Noble Rider and the Sound of Words ' Stevens defines the poet's measure as ' the measure of his power to abstract himself, and to withdraw with him into his abstraction the reality on which the lovers of truth insist. He must be able to abstract himself and also to abstract reality, which he does by placing it in his imagination '. This is not Platonism, or Taoism, because Stevens insists time and again upon his refusal to ' dismiss the particular facts of experience as of no importance in themselves.'[4] In fact, one of poetry's great functions, he affirms, is precisely to give ' the sense that we can touch and feel a solid reality which does not wholly dissolve itself into the conceptions of our own minds '.[4] We need not labour the point ; it is given specifically in ' On Poetic Truth ' and again in the seventh stanza of ' The Sail of Ulysses ', where Stevens, as if answering the disappointed readers, points to fateful necessity :

> The living man in the present place,
> Always, the particular thought
> Among Plantagenet abstractions,
> Always and always, the difficult inch,
> On which the vast arches of space
> Repose, always, the credible thought
> From which the incredible systems spring,
> The little confine soon unconfined
> In stellar largenesses—these
> Are the manifestations of a law
> That bends the particulars to the abstract,
> Makes them a pack on a giant's back,
> A majestic mother's flocking brood,
> As if abstractions were, themselves
> Particulars of a relative sublime.
> This is not poet's ease of mind.
> It is the fate that dwells in truth.
> We obey the coaxings of our end.

Thus far, Stevens's account of abstraction is undeniably impressive. We shall consider later its relation to the actual management of the later

[3] ibid., p. 281.
[4] ibid., p. 236.

poems. But his programme involves one further instrument which we have not yet discussed.

Stevens's object, then, in his later years, was to carry 'intuitions of sensibility' and 'concepts of the understanding' right through to a noumenal realm of 'ideas of reason'. (Kant's terms will suffice.) The enabling instrument is the productive imagination, but now more specifically through analogy, metaphor, resemblance, metamorphosis. By these means he hopes to maintain a life-line with his most innocent and vigorous apprehensions. Stevens has written so much about this that one is tempted to cite, as evidence, *Opera Omnia,* and leave it at that; but if we must select, then we name the second and tenth parts of the section of 'Notes' called 'It Must be Abstract'; the tenth part of 'It Must Change'; the tenth part of 'It Must Give Pleasure'; the essay 'Effects of Analogy'. These are all too long to quote; it is easier to paraphrase a few lines from 'Three Academic Pieces'. It is not too extravagant, Stevens says, to think of resemblances and of the repetitions of resemblances as a source of the ideal. In short, metaphor has its aspect of the ideal. 'This aspect of it cannot be dismissed merely because we think that we have long since outlived the ideal. The truth is that we are constantly outliving it and yet the ideal itself remains alive with an enormous life.'.

It would be inaccurate to suggest that Stevens's concept of analogy as the prime instrument of *relation,* and therefore of inclusive order, owes something to the scrupulous philosophic use of the term in certain Christian writers. But it is much closer to Christian thought, as I understand it, than, say, Pascal's idea that the three orders,—of nature, of mind, of charity—are discontinuous.[5] It is unnecessary and ungracious to push the theorist Stevens toward Dante and the *Purgatorio.* Indeed, he might have arrived at his position simply by taking the Bergsonian apprehension of flux and 'translating' it into positive terms of metamorphosis and transfiguration. We need not be categorical here, either.

In his third phase Stevens envisaged the poet as a systematic analogist, enjoying incalculable and unpredictable balances, 'not balances / That we achieve but balances that happen'. Of the hero in 'Local Objects' he notes:

> Little existed for him but the few things
> For which a fresh name always occurred, as if
> He wanted to make them, keep them from perishing,
>
> The few things, the objects of insight, the integrations
> Of feeling, the things that came of their own accord,
> Because he desired without knowing quite what,

[5] I have discussed this very briefly with reference to *Murder in the Cathedral* and *The Cocktail Party* in my *The Third Voice* (Princeton University Press, 1959) pp. 125 foll. See also Francis Fergusson, *The Idea of a Theatre* (Princeton University Press, 1949) and William F. Lynch, 'Theology and the Imagination', *Thought,* Spring 1954.

That were the moments of the classic, the beautiful.
These were that serene he had always been approaching
As toward an absolute foyer beyond romance.

The Figure of the Youth as Virile Poet is now that of Santayana, serene in Rome, in time and space, ' master and commiserable man ' :

Impatience for the grandeur that you need

In so much misery ; and yet finding it
Only in misery, the afflatus of ruin,

Profound poetry of the poor and of the dead,
As in the last drop of the deepest blood,
As it falls from the heart and lies there to be seen . . .

Santayana is the hero, the Whole Man, because he made for himself by deliberate choice a life in which the imagination ' had a function similar to its function in any deliberate work of art or letters '. And Stevens might have said of him, as he said of another, ' The vivid transparence that you bring is peace '. The hero is Santayana, not the ultimate Plato. In Stevens's poems Plato is a hazard, a beautiful but spectral condition, always there, supremely attractive to ascetics and to Stevens in occasional ascetic moments. He is more than a point of reference ; he is a great ' Way ', and Stevens has but to correct him, insinuating the particular, the actual, to delineate the condition of ultimate analogy, ' the poem of pure reality '. In a ' believer ' this condition would strive toward its definition in mystical terms, while the empirical facts would restrain it ; in Stevens there is the corresponding lyric experience of worshipping the human imagination as God. In an age of disbelief ' men feel that the imagination is the next greatest power to faith : the reigning prince '. Consequently their interest in the imagination and its work is ' a vital self-assertion in a world in which nothing but the self remains, if that remains '. The experience of the poet ' is of no less a degree than the experience of the mystic ' or the saint. In ' Final Soliloquy of the Interior Paramour ' the thought that ' the world imagined is the ultimate good ' enables the speaker to collect himself, out of all the indifferences, into one thing. In that ' miraculous ' condition he forgets himself :

We feel the obscurity of an order, a whole,
A knowledge, that which arranged the rendezvous.

Within its vital boundary, in the mind.
We say God and the imagination are one . . .
How high that highest candle lights the dark.

Out of this same light, out of the central mind,
He makes a dwelling in the evening air,
In which being there together is enough.

This is the only kind of transcendence our strictly humanist poet will allow ; seeing the gods dispelled in mid-air and dissolved like clouds, he does not cry out for their return ; man must ' resolve life and the world in his own terms '. The discipline of man's scope will be observed ' as an absolute, himself '. The earthly leader he seeks will stand without panache, ' Son only of man and sun of men '. After a lustre of the moon ' we say / We have not the need of any paradise, / We have not the need of any seducing hymn'. So instead of a God, Stevens speaks of a ' genius ' and calls this the human imagination. And the blessings it gives are those of serene comprehension ; thus he desires them :

> Just to know how it would feel, released from destruction,
> To be a bronze man breathing under archaic lapis,
>
> Without the oscillations of planetary pass-pass,
> Breathing his bronzen breath at the azury centre of time.

Stevens's position, in this third phase which we have posited, is that of a strict humanist claiming on man's behalf all the experience possible or imaginable between the dew of Florida and the ultimate Plato. He is a humanist invading noumenal territory. Traditionally, this has been accounted a dangerous region for the poet, and we have already seen that Stevens hoped to avoid ' pure ' abstraction by keeping the empirical fact as his close companion. This was his general policy, except while on vacation. The remainder of this essay will be concerned to see what the policy amounted to in the management of the poems.

III

We have mentioned the common assumption that a poet should avoid abstractions. Kenneth Burke's famous essay on the poetry of Theodore Roethke will serve as our text. Roethke, Burke tells us, goes as far as is humanly possible in search of a speech wholly devoid of abstractions ; one rarely finds in the verse a noun ending in ' -ness ' or ' -ity '.[6] In Kantian terms and with Roethke in mind, Burke suggests a direction which poetry might take in looking for a notable purification of language ; to avoid the terms for ' ideas ', or abstractions, and to use ' concepts ' only insofar as they would be needed to unify the manifold of ' intuitions '. The resultant vocabulary would be cleansed of ' such unwieldy expressions (now wielded by politicos and journalists) as : capitalism, fascism, socialism, communism, democracy, words unthinkable in Roethke's verse which features rather : cry, moon, stones, drip, toad, bones, snail, fish, etc. etc.' Burke seems to approve of Roethke in this regard.

He also advises that when reading one of Roethke's longer poems

[6] ' The Vegetal Radicalism of Theodore Roethke ' : *Sewanee Review*, LVIII, I, Winter, 1950, p. 74.

we should get the general *mood* of each stanza and then note the succession of images that actualize and amplify it. And he shows how this works in dealing with several passages, including the line from 'The Shape of the Fire' which reads: 'Water recedes to the crying of spiders'. Burke says that if spiders stand in general for the loathsome, the line might be translated formalistically: 'The principle of fertility is overcome by the principle of fear'. As regards the 'crying', of course spiders don't cry, but this is to be explained by Roethke's habit of using some word in the general category of *communication* whenever no particular verb is required. In psychoanalysis insects are said to figure often in dreams as surrogates for children, and in one of Roethke's own poems the foetuses are described as curling 'like dried spiders'. So the line, if trailed far enough, might bring us into the region of the 'birth trauma' as figuring an infant cry at separation from the placental bath. Burke gives more than this, but we have enough for discussion. The first point which is abundantly clear is that the words, as Roethke gives them, have no reference to any sensory event, real or imagined. Roethke starts out with an 'idea', which might roughly be given as: 'The principle of fertility is overcome by the principle of fear'. He then translates this into imagistic terms, using relatively common symbolic counters. His line has therefore the appearance of being 'intuitive', sensory, apprehensive, empirical, but in fact it has no such reality at all; to give it some reality we have to 'translate' it back again into the 'idea', complete with its abstractions. This is an unwieldy process, and the margin of error is great and would be enormous if Roethke's symbolic equivalents were more esoteric than they happen to be in the present case. This turns up quite often. 'Greenhouse' is not a public symbol for 'the whole of life, a womb, a heaven-on-earth', and there is no way of being sure about the correspondence except that Roethke has informed us and we take his word. Getting back to the water-and-spiders; the original 'idea' is interesting and perhaps even profound in its bearing upon the poem, but it is badly served by a bogus translation into impossible sensory terms. If the poet could devise imagistic terms, consistent in their syntax, which would communicate a corresponding 'idea' and at the same time 'actualize' it in sensory experience, that would be fine. Shakespeare has done this in a few sonnets; Valéry in 'Le Cimetière Marin'; Joyce in 'The Dead'. But Roethke has not done so in the present case. Meanwhile there is no point in making abstractions dirty words if they can be kept or made clean. They are not there merely to provide smoke-screens for journalists. Coleridge knew this and took pains to keep us informed; there is a great moment in *Biographia Literaria* when he specified the best part of human language, or—better still—this piece from the unpublished *Logic*:

> In disciplining the mind one of the first rules should be, to lose no opportunity of tracing words to their origin; one good consequence of which will be, that he will be able to use the *language* of sight without being enslaved by its affections. He will at least secure himself from the delusive notion, that what is not *imageable* is likewise not *conceivable*. To emancipate the mind from the despotism of the eye is the first step towards its emancipation from the influences and intrusions of the senses, sensations and passions generally. Thus most effectually is the power of abstraction to be called forth, strengthened and familiarized, and it is this power of abstraction that chiefly distinguishes the human understanding from that of the higher animals—and in the different degrees in which this power is developed, the superiority of man over man mainly consists.[7]

Stevens took his abstractions very seriously. Witness his efforts with the word 'nobility', in 'The Noble Rider and the Sound of Words'; or his hymns to 'wholeness'. But he knew and did not need Randall Jarrell to tell him that we believe in the poet's abstractions only if they are endorsed by sensory evidence. The onus is on the poet.

What follows now is a short list of Stevens's procedures in deploying abstractions.

(*a*) *To dissociate the abstractions into 'qualitative' particulars.*

Here are two stanzas from 'Woman Looking at a Vase of Flowers':

> Hoot, little owl within her, how
> High blue became particular
> In the leaf and bud and how the red,
> Flicked into pieces, points of air,
> Became—how the central, essential red,
> Escaped its large abstraction, became,
> First, summer, then a lesser time,
> Then the sides of peaches, of dusky pears.
>
> Hoot how the inhuman colors fell
> Into place beside her, where she was,
> Like human conciliations, more like
> A profounder reconciling, an act,
> An affirmation free from doubt.
> The crude and jealous formlessness
> Became the form and the fragrance of things
> Without clairvoyance, close to her.

(*b*) *To transform abstractions into 'things', giving them contingent traits, as of colour, shape, etc.*

In 'Meditation Celestial and Terrestrial' Stevens places a condition of natural liaison with one's environment beside one in which we

[7] The edited text is given in Alice D. Snyder, *Coleridge on Logic and Learning* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1929) pp. 126-7.

employ our own resources to ' contain ' our environment ; natural accord, set beside enforced tension. Saying :

> Day after day, throughout the winter,
> We hardened ourselves to live by bluest reason
> In a world of wind and frost, . . .

The reason is blue and soon will be ' radiant ', as befitting something clinically exact and, within its own field, ' perfect '. But the imperfect is our paradise ; we are restless in a world without dapple, purified beyond our recognition or desire. Stevens goes half-way toward personifying the human reason, giving it just enough identity to stand as a poor substitute for natural liaisons. Similarly he half-personifies ' afternoon ' in *The Auroras of Autumn* (' not the white of an aging afternoon ') to give it an identity nearly commensurate with that of the white flower. We include here also ' Another Weeping Woman ', in which poison as suffering-in-bitterness is given vegetal identity :

> Poison grows in this dark.
> It is in the water of tears
> Its black blooms rise.

Again, in ' The pensive giant prone in violet space ', from ' It Must Be Abstract ', the *scene* is qualitatively enriched for the benefit of the *agent.* In ' Banal Sojourn ' the abstraction ' radiance ' is personified and rendered dynamic as a girl ' running down, slim through the bareness ', seen thus by the already ' personified ' serene beast, Summer. Stevens, who found it easy to think in abstract terms, found it only natural to supply his abstractions with dynamic energy.

(*c*) *To refrain from asking abstractions to do too much.*

Very often Stevens will use an abstraction to bring scope and resonance in a context in which the precise notations are made by other means. We have this, from ' Esthétique du Mal' :

> Lakes are more reasonable than oceans. Hence,
> A promenade amid the grandeurs of the mind,
> By a lake, with clouds like lights among great tombs,
> Gives one a blank uneasiness, as if
> One might meet Konstantinov, who would interrupt
> With his lunacy.

' Grandeurs ' need not be clarified, because in any event its pretensions are rebuked in ' promenade ' ; any large gesture will do, provided it trails a few ambiguous clouds of *gloire* with it. ' Uneasiness ' needs only a neutral adjective to hold it up until the Konstantinov-phrase defines it once for all. In ' velvetest far-away ', from ' It Must Be Abstract ', most of the work is done by the adjective, and the abstraction carries the connotations into the distance. In ' the green freedom of

the cockatoo ', from ' Sunday Morning ', the freedom is carried by the green cockatoo with some assistance from coffee, oranges, and peignoirs.

(*d*) *To ' complete ' the abstraction by an image, or any other dramatic detail, thus humanizing it.*

In ' Repetitions of a Young Captain ' we meet this :

> Secrete us in reality. Discover
> A civil nakedness in which to be,
>
> In which to bear with the exactest force
> The precisions of fate, nothing fobbed off, nor changed
> In a beau language without a drop of blood.

In ' Description without Place ' :

> An age is solitude
> Or a barricade against the singular man
> By the incalculably plural . . .

and further on in the same poem :

> It is an expectation, a desire,
> A palm that rises up beyond the sea . . .

In ' Credences of Summer ' :

> The utmost must be good and is
> And is our fortune and honey hived in the trees
> And mingling of colors at a festival.

In ' The Sail of Ulysses ' Stevens speaks of a human loneliness, a part of space and solitude, in which knowledge cannot be denied, in which nothing of knowledge fails. And as if this parade of abstractions might be too ascetic and spare to win our response, he completes the statement with a selection of correlative images :

> The luminous companion, the hand,
> The fortifying arm, the profound
> Response, the completely answering voice . . .

I do not imagine that Stevens would have required an aesthetic to endorse this procedure, but we can well use John Crowe Ransom's remarkable essay on the Concrete Universal to understand it now.[8] Ransom is concerned with the various ways in which an overwhelmingly ' complete ' statement might be made, a statement satisfying at once to the understanding and the imagination. At one point in his discourse he remarks that in a poem the intellectual Universal does not necessarily disappear from sight, existing now only in the Concrete. As often as not, he says, a poem will recite its two versions, side by side. Thus

[8] *Poems and Essays* (New York : Vintage Books, 1955) pp. 159 foll.

Portia, explaining that the quality of mercy is unconstrained, gives this as a moral Universal ; but lest it might in this form be unintelligible—or, we add, incomplete, a little thin—she gives it a poetic consummation in an image : ' It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven / Upon the place beneath '. To Mr Ransom's many examples we would add the first of Stevens's ' *Two Letters* ' :

> Even if there had been a crescent moon
> On every cloud-tip over the heavens,
> Drenching the evening with crystals' light,
>
> One would have wanted more—more—more—
> Some true interior to which to return,
> A home against one's self, a darkness,
>
> An ease in which to live a moment's life,
> The moment of life's love and fortune,
> Free from everything else, free above all from thought.
>
> It would have been like lighting a candle,
> Like leaning on the table, shading one's eyes,
> And hearing a tale one wanted intensely to hear,
>
> As if we were all seated together again
> And one of us spoke and all of us believed
> What we heard and the light, though little, was enough.

Two sentences, hinged upon the abstractions ' ease ' and ' darkness ' ; the aspiration is named in the first sentence, and enacted humanely in the second, with all the emblems of communication in accord. There is no redundancy, only completeness, with the suggestion that all the modes of the life of the psyche are dependent one upon another and, ideally, in full accord. Here the ' plot ' of the abstraction has been completed by analagous ' characters ' in dynamic relation. Stevens was an incomplete dramatist, at best, but he knew that the safest way to show ideas, or abstractions, is in action. Thus in ' The Comedian as the Letter C ' it is Crispin who humanizes the ideas and abstractions, giving them roles in his picaresque journey through provisional answers and satisfactions. For the same reason Ramon Fernandez gets a seat in the stalls for ' The Idea of Order at Key West '. And for the same reason Stevens attributes most of his philosophical observations to a sharply defined and colourful *persona,* a speaker sufficiently ' characteristic ' or even idiosyncratic to establish, through his words, a distinctive dramatic scene ; as, notably, in ' To a High Toned Old Christian Woman ' and ' Le Monocle de Mon Oncle '. This is one of his most persistent strategies.

(*e*) *To present the ultimate meaning of experience in certain striking gestures or manifestations, themselves so defined and 'rendered' as to carry the abstractions with ease.*

Stevens is a poet after Longinus. Many of his most humanist meanings issue, however, not as declarations but as still-lifes ; his solitudes of sense are often as static as travel-posters. 'Statement' is often translated into a purely scenic image. This can be a quietist evasion. Only a very bland humanism is content to put a stop to the wrestling of idea and counter-idea by dissolving the struggle in a scenic image. In 'Landscape with Boat' it is evasive and rather absurd for Stevens to tell his floribund ascetic, after a lifetime of scrupulous philosophical rejections, that all he need do is sit on a sofa on a balcony above the Mediterranean with his eyes wide open, saying : 'the thing I hum appears to be / The rhythm of this celestial pantomime'. To compare such Longinian disclosures with Yeats's, as in 'Upon a Dying Lady' and 'In Memory of Major Robert Gregory', is to find Stevens's rather thin, if not precious. For an avowed humanist, Stevens had a curious fondness for the decoratively statuesque. (But there are dozens of poems to which none of this applies : 'The World as Meditation', 'Sunday Morning', 'The Sail of Ulysses', 'Page from a Tale', 'To an Old Philosopher in Rome', 'Reality is an Activity of the Most August Imagination', 'St. Armorer's Church', and many more.)

At his best, Stevens commands a dense and virile speech which can deploy abstractions, without provincialism or pedantry. One poem will make the point : in a highly improbable piece called 'Saint John and the Back-Ache' Saint John says that 'the world is presence and not force', and he proceeds to illustrate his text. He draws several images out of the air, telling his auditor that these help us face the abyss between us and the object :

> The little ignorance that is everything,
> The possible nest in the invisible tree,
> Which in a composite season, now unknown,
> Denied, dismissed, may hold a serpent, loud
> In our captious hymns, erect and sinuous,
> Whose venom and whose wisdom will be one.
> Then the stale turtle will grow limp from age.
> We shall be heavy with the knowledge of that day.

IV

We have now to put these fragmentary matters back where they belong, in our experience of the poems themselves. Or, for now, one of them ; we choose a late poem from *The Rock*.

'Prologues to What is Possible' is a poem in two parts: the first commits itself to a metaphor; the second takes the resultant situation as given, and meditates upon it. The poem starts from an abstraction, 'There was an ease of mind...'; this is immediately translated, enacted in imagistic terms, on the principle of the expanding rule. Each major image as it comes forward is accorded full substance in its appropriate setting. A brief paraphrase will show the procedure. The ease of mind was like being alone in a boat at sea: the waves were like the bright backs of oarsmen: the oarsmen gripped their oars and pulled in flawless unity, knowing their destination. The boat was made of stones that had lost their weight and retained now only a fabulous brilliance. So the man who stood up in the boat looking before him seemed not at all like one voyaging beyond the familiar. He was the genius of the boat; he travelled as if lured by a syllable which contained the meaning of things. And he knew that this meaning would shatter the boat and leave the oarsmen quiet 'As at a point of central arrival, an instant moment, much or little, / Removed from any shore, from any man or woman, and needing none'. The metaphor, we are told, 'stirred his fear'; the object with which he was compared was beyond his recognizing:

> By this he knew that likeness of him extended
> Only a little way, and not beyond, unless between himself
> And things beyond resemblance there was this and that intended to be recognised,
> The this and that in the enclosures of hypotheses
> On which men speculated in summer when they were half asleep.

That is to say that the imagination in summer fecundity thrusts us beyond our daily selves into other hypothetical selves, each of which rages for disclosure and, disclosed, discovers in the chaos of our lives its own provisional order. These selves, in sequence, lead us into the ordered realm of 'things beyond themselves'. The poem is therefore a meditation upon the possible disclosure, recognition, and delivery of our hypothetical selves; through analogy and metaphor. The process itself is freely enacted in the first Prologue, and a meditation, in awe, follows. The theme is certainly large enough to sustain a poem of this length and to satisfy the emotional demands which Stevens makes upon it. All the emotion is earned. In fact, the poem convinces largely because its tone is that of tactful narrative in the 'middle' style. Its claims are totally free from exorbitance. The statements within the poem are consistent in themselves and appropriate in context: the discourse of the poem as a whole is momentous and it is very likely to be true to the evidence of the reader's own life. Although the poem says a great deal, none of it is mere talk, and Stevens takes care to

humanize his abstractions as he proceeds. The figure of the poem might be given as : ' It was as if . . .' ; where the ' It ' is an abstraction, named and clarified as much as the language will allow, and the ' as if ' introduces the correlative images. Thus the poem gives the impression of being complete, achieved, realized. Reading it, we re-enact the meditative experience behind it and are to that extent the richer.

I do not assert that the method of ' Prologues to What is Possible ', ' To an Old Philosopher in Rome ', and ' St. Armorer's Church from the Outside ' is the one-and-only method for modern poetry ; but I believe it is the best method. Each of the reasons I propose to offer for this view would require a long theoretical essay to substantiate it. There is no longer any orthodoxy, and fashion is a poor substitute. But if the reasons are taken together, one will support another ; or so I hope. I should argue for Stevens's method, in these late poems, that its range is wider than that of any other method with which we are familiar. It is not debarred from any mode of the spirit's life ; it is not compelled to omit or evade anything. It rehabilitates the abstract order. It has all the virtues of good prose, of civilized speech. It has all the resources of grammar, logic, and rhetoric. It can ' render ' any human experience, real or imagined, within the limits of the poet's own powers. It is less tempted than most other methods to be coy, brittle, self-conscious, arbitrary, oracular, predatory, or mysterious. Its life is continuous with that of its presumed readers, and it gains much of its solidity and conviction from that fact. It offers an escape from the Symbolist impasse without in any sense forcing the poet to drown the Self in its environment. I fancy Jacques Rivière would have acclaimed these late poems if they had turned up while he was writing ' Le Roman d'Aventure '. I am also encouraged to believe that the affluent and genial modes of *The Rock* are in full accord with those of *The Wild Swans at Coole.*

English in Our Secondary Schools

by THOMAS HALTON

IF I may seek refuge in advance against missiles of the *ne sutor supra crepidam* variety, I may say that I have engaged in teaching English, seven years hard, at Intermediate and Leaving Certificate level, Pass, Honours, and Fail, so I know, if not all the answers, at least most of the questions. These questions are not often raised in print, but are frequently discussed in common rooms and at various musterings of the teaching body. The absence of written dialogue, however, produces an unwarranted sense of complacency about the standing of the Queen's English in our midst, and a failure to realize that an English Revival is at present almost as necessary, and almost as difficult of attainment, as a Gaelic Revival.

I shall keep to the secondary schools, and try to avoid the habit, so popular in academic circles, whereby those at university level blame the secondary schools for the deficiencies of undergraduates, and those at secondary level blame the primary schools for pupil deficiencies and the universities for teacher deficiencies. For, in a matter so urgent as the improvement of English standards, what is called for is not mutual recrimination, but joint, positive action, involving a thorough re-examination of objects, aims, and methods.

A sentence from the Report on Secondary Education of the Advisory Council on Education in Scotland[1] might, with little or no *mutatis mutandis,* be taken as basic to necessary reforms in Irish education. It says: 'No problem within the whole range of the secondary curriculum is comparable in urgency and importance with that of securing a good standard in the understanding and use of English.' Without trying subversively to dislodge the built-in position of Irish as our 'first' language, it is nonetheless salutary to reflect that, for the vast majority of us, English is, and will be, our regular medium of communication in every sphere of our lives. Its practical use to so many Irishmen in making a living need hardly be stressed. *Gan teanga, gan tír,* then, up to a point, but keeping in mind the emigrant ship, and the emigrant remittances, *gan Béarla, gan tír* also.

Aims in Teaching English

The aims in teaching English are generally spoken of in terms of the improvement of reading, writing, speaking, and listening. All too often the subject 'English' receives a much narrower interpretation

[1] *Scottish Education Department. Secondary Education. A Report of the Advisory Council on Education in Scotland.* Edinburgh: Her Majesty's Stationery Office. (Reprinted 1958), par. 269.

in Irish schools, almost the whole time being devoted to written work—written exercises that are likely to have some utilitarian value in public examinations. This expertise is acquired at the expense of speech training, conversational improvement, and the development of reading taste.[1] So it happens that frequent complaints are heard from business people that their secretaries (who have 'Honours English Leaving') are quite inept at letter-writing, or awkward in using the telephone. It is also remarkable how many of our professional people never read a book, apart from their works of reference. These are the areas of our least conspicuous success as teachers of English: development of reading taste and conversational ability.

Basically, English should include grammar, spelling, punctuation, capitalization, vocabulary study, and pronunciation, and most of First Year English could usefully be spent at these activities. The prevalent temptation, one feels, is for teachers to rush prematurely into the safer, but narrower, fields of Prescribed Prose and Prescribed Poetry in the comforting knowledge that if these are ploughed and harrowed over two years they are almost bound to yield a respectable harvest on the Intermediate Certificate, in spite of deficiencies in grammar and punctuation. Most teachers, I imagine, have had the disquieting experience of getting students to Honours standard English in the Intermediate who could not speak, or write, or read English at all well—the uncharitably disposed might simply say could not do it at all! But with proper coaching and preliminary 'spoon-feeding' a multitude of imperfections can be covered.

About the *content* of our existing programme, if there is one criticism more than another that can be levelled against it, it is that *it is not sufficiently contemporary*. The Curriculum Commission of the National Council of Teachers of English lays down some directions that will help as points of reference.

> The design of the language arts curriculum should . . . be derived from these significant centres of need and interest which occasion real communication. Problems of values, of interpersonal relations, of recreation and leisure, of life purposes, of the spirit and aspirations of the democratic society, of world unity, of the motives of human beings, of the intelligent utilization of the mass media of communication, of the meaning of life itself—these should provide the substance of the language arts programme from which maturity of expression and understanding may be expected to emerge under the guidance of teachers who have a genuine comprehension of the ways in which young people grow in language power.[2]

[1] Shortcomings in English teaching are by no means confined to Ireland. See, e.g. 'English in Wales. A Neglected Subject', in *Times Educational* Supplement (31/10/'58).

[2] *An Experience Curriculum in English.* A Report of the Curriculum Commission of the National Council of Teachers of English. W. Wilbur Hatfield. New York. London, 1935.

We are particularly weak in this matter of real communication, and when we impose Sequences of Thought, and Paraphrase, and Central Ideas, and Character Sketches, and Discuss, with Apt Quotations, on our pupils (taking over without any repairs or renovations the old stock-in-trade on which we ourselves were raised) we are making our pupils talk a language that is to them, and to us, if we only admitted it, unreal, anaemic, antiquated, and deadly dull. In our existing programme there is very little attempt to reach ' those significant centres of need and interest '. English teachers know only too well the few occasions when they are reached : Falstaff never fails ; neither does the Bashful Man ; Goldsmith scores a bull's eye, and some classroom debates on subjects like Day versus Boarding Schools. But how much of the prescribed Prose and Poetry is far out on the periphery of the centres of need and interest !

What is required is not just a programme calculated to draw more laughs, for our task is to prepare people for life, and life is no laughing matter. What is required is a programme more in harmony with the needs, interests, values, and aspirations of man in the modern world, and of Irishmen in particular. The whole purpose of the English course is to acquire keenness of observation and a penetrating insight into the feelings, aspirations, loves, hopes, fears, and inner conflicts of our fellow human beings. As it is, many of our pupils get these insights, not from the English course, but from the films and comics. Teacher and student are living in different worlds, and the system of inter-communication has either never been made or is broken down. And it is time that our Repair Squad got under way. For if it be true that ' charitable communication can be attained only when every pupil is led to the maximum accomplishment of which he is capable in reading, writing, speaking, and listening ',[1] then we can say without exaggeration that our system of communication has flaws on all four lines.

Prescribed and Open Courses

The battle between Prescribed and Open Courses will never cease. No sooner has one system been installed than the advantages of the other become apparent. The English Course, as at present prescribed, ensures that a student on completion of Leaving Certificate has read and studied two plays of Shakespeare—just two—, about two dozen essays from Intermediate and Leaving Certificate Prose, maybe twice that many poems from the corresponding Poetry anthologies, and that is that. For Leaving Certificate, ' special attention ' is devoted to maybe

[1] Foreword to *English in the Catholic Secondary School.* (The Proceedings of the Workshop on English in the Catholic Secondary School conducted at the Catholic University of America) 1955, ed. by Sister Mary Janet Miller, S.C., Ph.D.

ten poets, which means that precious little attention is paid to the rest, and some major poets can go untouched. The novel need never be mentioned, nor the drama, apart from the prescribed Shakespearean play. Even Shakespeare comes out of it poorly, for in some years a class can go through Leaving Certificate without ever having heard of *Hamlet, Macbeth, King Lear,* or *Othello.*

There is a token division of the prescribed Poetry into English and Anglo-Irish poems, with Yeats generally getting 'special attention'. But some of our other writers—Sheridan, Shaw, Synge, O'Casey, Joyce—need never have existed, and are much better known to secondary school students outside Ireland than they are at home. Our students, though, know the rhyming scheme of a Petrarchan sonnet, and they try, as best they can, to remember concerning every line of their prescribed play (*a*) who said it, and (*b*) to whom it was said. From the point of view of marks it is twice as valuable to know (*a*) and (*b*) as to know just (*a*). From any other point of view it seems, to the present writer at least, to be very expendable knowledge.

It will be urged that a good teacher will not confine himself to prescribed texts but will range freely over the whole field of literature. Most students, however, simply cannot afford the luxury of a truly liberal education. The prescribed courses and the examinations that go with them are necessary for them by a necessity of means—the necessity of getting a scholarship, or getting a job—and teachers learn from experience that high marks are got by their students not by ranging over wide fields but by cross-harrowing the prescribed corner. And this, be it said, is no triumph of depth over breadth.

One hesitates to repeat the platitude that the school library is the necessary extension and complement of the English class, especially as Irish schools have generally to operate on a tight budget in this matter. But a little more collaboration between school and public library authorities would bring a much wider service than is sometimes available. In this regard it is difficult to avoid feeling envious of the material resources of some American schools. How else is one to react on reading, for instance, that for the past two years the library section of the Los Angeles city schools has been experimenting with the use of IBM punch cards in ordering magazines.[1] But the point that it is important to make here is that the English course as at present constituted does not have any compelling reasons for students to visit any libraries. The public examination takes no soundings of extra-curricular reading, and there is little chance of the bright boy dragging

[1] See Bibliography to 'Promoting Growth in Reading in High School' by Sister Mary Nila, Ph.D., Director, the Archbishop Cushing Educational Clinic, Boston, in *English in the Catholic Secondary School,* pp. 186-90. See also *The Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary School Principals,* 43, 250, (Nov. '59), devoted to *The Effective Secondary School Library.*

it in by the heels, the result being that the bright boy generally spends what might well be general reading time at revising his trigonometry or Fenian poetry.

Even within a prescribed programme there should be some way devised of testing and rewarding the general reading of the more diligent students. This, in practice, is the only way to ensure that the generality of teachers will stimulate and supervise the out-of-class reading of their students. Indeed, many teachers have not sufficiently clear ideas of what should constitute out-of-class reading, and behind some vague formula like ' the classics ' they shirk their responsibility of giving some introduction to contemporary literature.

Teaching English Composition

The English teacher needs to fortify himself regularly with the reflection that in teaching composition he is teaching an art, perhaps the only art form which his school has on offer. He must not expect much in the way of pleasure or personal satisfaction from his weekly task of correcting 100 to 150 essays, for this can be a soul-destroying job, unlikely to improve his own style, and bound to interfere with his golf or bridge. Besides, and in this consolation some teachers take refuge too easily, composition can scarcely be taught at all. Or, more precisely, bearing in mind a distinction fashionable with American teachers, functional writing can be taught, but hardly creative writing.

When one meets a pupil with an incipient sense of style, even a glimmer of the elusive ' spark ' (and such a pupil occurs one in sixty, or maybe in a hundred), then the teacher can do a great deal to foster the spark, coaxing, fanning, encouraging it to flame, seeing that the quickly-forming ashes are removed, and that the right sort of fuel is kept to it. But not much more. Where there is no spark, no sign of life, no sense of form, the temptation is for the teacher to feel that he can achieve little or nothing.

At this stage it is well to introduce a quotation from an English teacher of obvious dedication to his work, a man with a crusading ideal :

> Of all teachers, the teacher of composition must be alive, richly alive on a high level of awareness. He must be in love with life, deeply in love with God, with the world, and with his fellow-men. He must be vastly impressed with the mystery and the glory and the splendour and the variety of it all.[1]

This quotation should help to expose the fallacy in the too widely accepted notion that ' anybody can take an English class.' On the contrary, it is clearly a job calling for vision, sympathy, sensitivity, patience, and dedication of a very high order.

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[1] J. J. Ryan, on ' The Place of Composition ' in *Workshop Proceedings*, 1-17.

The writer of the article just cited mentions three distinct elements in the art of teaching composition : creativeness, craft, and criticism. Creativeness, the God-like desire and ability to make, is something that we must presume present in some degree, however rudimentary, in every adopted son of God. Not all have the desire and ability to make the same compositions, so the teacher must not inflict his own predilections on his pupils. Sometimes a listing of the titles over a year's class work is a comprehensive introduction to the hive of bees buzzing in the teacher's bonnet. It would be much more rewarding to have got the students' bees to buzz. Towards this end it may be both helpful and enlightening to allow the students to suggest their own titles. At any rate it will always be wise to give a choice of subjects, even within the one class.

Craft, the *recta ratio faciendi,* can be broken down further into the elements of unity, emphasis, and coherence. With this tool-box aspect of composition teachers are generally familiar, and can generally tell which element is most absent, but they sorely need some kind of shorthand in which to pass on the information to their students. The shorthand exists, and elaborate forms of it are to be found in American text-books, but one feels that it is not widely known or used in Irish schools. Are we inclined to treat composition, not as a craft that can be learned by rule and measure, but rather as a hit-or-miss, pot-shot affair, in which the weekly rifle range drill gives a sort of cumulative accuracy and efficacy ?

Criticism may take three forms : self-criticism, group-criticism, and criticism by the teacher. Self-criticism is always salutary, on the basis that a mistake recognized and admitted by the offender is less likely to be repeated. Group criticism has its own subtle dangers, especially among boys, and the level of praise will too often depend on the individual's standing among his fellows, and private feuds may sometimes be settled under the guise of literary criticism. About criticism by the teacher, the principle has been laid down that 'several times in the semester each student should have a full-fledged constructive criticism with a personal interview if that is at all possible '. Irish schools, particularly boarding schools, rooted in a somewhat Spartan tradition of regimentation and impersonal impartiality, may not take kindly to the ' personal interview ' idea, but in encouraging any art-form some kind of personal supervision, the tutorial idea, seems essential, though it means additional inroads on the teacher's time, further undermining of his ivory tower.

There is a further question : How are compositions graded ? The Certificate examination blithely assigns 120 marks out of 400 for the Essay. How are these marks distributed ? Is it theoretically possible to get full marks, or is an essay, by definition, foredoomed to fall short

of the maximum? In practice, how many get full marks? Are there good years and bad years, good tests and bad tests, good examiners and bad examiners? Does A, marking inland, give 60, where B, in his deck-chair at Killiney or Salthill, would give 75? Admittedly there is a chief Examiner for purposes of co-ordination, and a preliminary conference where standards are set and pencils sharpened or blunted in advance. But there are bound to be anomalies. We all have heard of the teacher who, last year, gave 82 per cent. to the bright boy in 5A for his essay on 'The Future of Irish Television', but fails to recognize the self-same essay served up this year by an enterprising copyist in 4B, and gives it a miserly 56 per cent. It happens all the time, the unavoidable fallibility involved in trying to express qualitative differences quantitatively.

This problem has been discussed recently in *Atlantic Monthly,* where it is asserted that teachers do not even agree with themselves when they read papers, much less with other readers. Some interesting statistics are produced. In one study, an eighth grade composition was graded twice by 28 teachers. Fifteen who gave it passing marks the first time failed it on the second round, while 11 who failed it the first time passed it the second. As for different readers' opinions of the same paper, grades ranging from 50 to 98 have been provided on the same paper as read by 142 teachers.[1] Granted, then, that all examination results are approximations, the marking of composition, English and Irish, is the least accurate or standardized approximation, and is, perhaps, the sole remaining area where the margin between teachers' prognostications and Certificate results is *sometimes* great.

The prepared essay is the inveterate foe of all attempts on the part of the examiner to elicit the writer's *own* thoughts and feelings on a given subject. The present writer has some small experience of this in marking English Essay in an Entrance Scholarship Examination. One year, for the one student who tackled a slightly off-beat subject entitled *My Favourite Radio Programme,* twenty-five sallied forth to describe *A Day in the Bog,* many of them, one felt, having never taken part in any field exercises, and with nothing to fortify them except a conducted literary tour under their far-sighted teachers.

In the same way, and on a wider scale, far-sighted secondary teachers can often forecast at least one of the four or five essays that 'come up' at the end of the year, and what the examiner gets is not creative writing, but the *crambe repetita,* the heated-up cabbage of a class meal, maybe several months back. This mass processing of the teacher's ingenuity can hardly be called a genuine product of the student's imagination. It can hardly be called an essay at all.

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1 'The Plight of the English Teacher', in *Atlantic Monthly,* 204.5, (Nov. '59), 122-4.

Considerations of this sort have led in the United States to the elimination of the essay examination as a College entrance test, and a substitution of the so-called objective test, but this is already being seen as something of a calamity. Nobody, not even the pupils, would like to see the essay disappear from the Irish scene. But to offset the amount of prepared work that goes into the average essay, it might be worth considering the possibility of reducing the amount of time and marks allocated to creative writing (i.e. the essay, as at present conceived), and to introduce a section of communication writing, unprescribed, unforeseeable, and unstylized, which would really test the student's own ability to express himself on concrete, topical subjects. (I still remember a written Irish examination from the late Fr Larry Murray, which had no essay, but in which we were asked to write six or seven telegrams on some fairly detailed, practical situation—an excellent practical test, and almost fool-proof against prior coaching.)

Writing to have any value must be something observed, felt, and communicated. In the matter of essay-writing, it is children's observations we are dealing with, so it is a mistake to send them on men's errands, expecting them to write scientific despatches for the *Guardian* or leaders for the *Times*. If they are ever to write well as adults, it is important that they attain competence in observing, feeling, and communicating at the child's level. But, in the present framework of fairly stereotyped essays and 'set' prose and poetry, we can never be sure that a single item communicated has been observed or felt by the pupils themselves. There is the lurking suspicion that the teacher does all the photographing, goes into class, and hands round the negatives. The results may be clear, accurate, and competent, but their most obvious characteristic is dull, unrelieved uniformity.

The Speaking of English

In schools where no separate provision is made for elocution (and there are still too many such), the English teacher must regard speech training as part of his responsibility. In practice it may often be necessary for the teacher to learn something himself about the techniques of effective public speaking, and the special requirements of an effective oral style. 'The English teacher must be trained to distinguish between language for writing and language for speaking, must know how to teach bodily control and voice improvement, and must be able to guide students in using these tools.' [1] One suspects that the reason why more English teachers do not provide such helpful pedagogy in Irish schools is that they feel incompetent to do so, and that they simply do not have the 'know-how' themselves. Without subscribing to the

[1] *An Experience Curriculum*, p. 133.

current heresy that a Summer School (in America they call it a Workshop) is a panacea for all our educational ills, one feels that an Elocution Week might accomplish more for teachers than a Week at almost anything else.

Of the *need* for more speech training in our secondary schools there can hardly be any question for, quite bluntly, the big weakness in many of our secondary school products is their inability to talk, and to give an articulate account of the talents which they undoubtedly possess. It is a common experience of people who sit on Interview Boards that the showing of secondary pupils is often not nearly so good as the records of their written examinations had led them to suppose. Fortunately for the pupils, the eloquent percentage records of their ability are often allowed to speak in place of their tongue-tied selves.

Speech training is begun at an early stage in American schools, generally with gratifying results. The avowed aim in such training is to enable young Americans to pass themselves gracefully in society. Formal speaking is, perhaps, easier to teach than informal, and the spur of emulation is always a help. Debating, in some rudimentary stage, goes on in most schools, and in some it reaches great heights of eloquence, but for the most part it is a strictly intra-mural activity. The idea of inter-schools' debates on the evenings of inter-schools' games might be more extensively canvassed. The double bill of fare would be a more comprehensive testing of the brain and brawn of rival institutions, and what one side might lose in the hurling swings it might gain in the oratorical round-abouts. The idea works well in some American high-schools of my knowledge, so much so that trying to ' make ' the school debating team has, I have been assured, raised the standard of speaking in the whole school.

The idea of paying equal attention to the language for writing and the language for speaking is by no means new—for long it was the highest ideal of Greek and Roman education—but the fact that speaking is not subjected to public examination has undoubtedly meant that it has been getting less and less attention in our schools. To restore the balance, we might all meditate on Newman's idea of education :

> that which gives a man a clear, conscious view of his own opinions and judgements, a truth in developing them, an eloquence in expressing them, and a force in urging them. . . It shows him how to accommodate himself to others, how to throw himself into their state of mind, how to bring before them his own, how to influence them, how to come to an understanding with them . . . he is able to converse, he is able to listen, he knows when to be serious, and when to trifle, and he has a sure tact which enables him to trifle with gracefulness and to be serious with effect.

Perhaps the social objective of being a good host or guest, or of conversing interestingly and pleasantly to guests over ' refreshments ', is not so very American or ultra-modern after all.

The Mass Media

Students are seldom consulted about their likes and dislikes in the school curriculum, and maybe for the teachers' peace of mind it is just as well. The Americans have no such qualms about hurt feelings, and many investigations have been made in an effort to understand students' interests. In one such study[1] it was found that English was fairly popular with girls, and unpopular with boys. When they were questioned about what they wanted to get out of an English course most of the emphasis in the replies was on how-to-do-it skills : how to use the telephone, how to develop a good speaking voice, how to organize ideas and present them, how to tell a joke. Many who were left completely cold by the so-called ' classics of English literature ' which were being fed to them, showed more sympathy with the ' oral topics period ', and ' panel discussions '.

Whilst it would never do to give the pupils the whole say in drawing up the English programme, it is still useful to give some thought to their likes and dislikes, and also to the changing world in which they will live. Above all, it must be borne in mind that the present-day world is largely a world of oral, rather than written, communication. So it is that in the English programme of the future the mass media will have to get increasing attention.

Hitherto, the mass media have not got sufficient attention in our Irish schools. The daily papers, for generations, have been denied entry to many boarding schools. Magazines have been viewed as a form of contraband, liable to immediate confiscation and penalty. Radio, for the most part, is given the briefest innings, and Television is the Big Bad Wolf round the next corner. Yet English teachers should feel that they have a special responsibility in regard to these newer media of mass communication, and should endeavour to use them to achieve an extension of their pupils' interests, an improvement in their tastes, and a development of their critical powers.

The American approach is, perhaps, more pragmatic than ours, but, in the long run, more realistic. Most of to-day's high-school students depend for entertainment and information on newspapers and magazines, radio, television, and motion pictures. For these people books are, at best, a second choice. Ignoring the mass media and placing all attention on the literature bound between hard covers means that

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[1] *An Evaluation of the English Program by Non-College Preparatory Students in Grades Ten to Twelve,* a doctoral thesis by Margaret Early, Boston University.

teachers are missing the opportunity to improve tastes and appreciations in the area where the chances of improvement are best.

Dissatisfaction with the traditional curriculum can lead to a swing too far in the other direction. Not all, for instance, would agree with this outspoken conclusion : ' Improvement in English will not come from a timid chopping away at a monolith of tradition. In the rejection of the traditional programme by both experts and students, the classroom teacher has been given a clear signal to introduce any innovations so long as they meet the two-fold test of stimulating pupils' interest and improving skill in communication.'[1] Yet it is good, fighting talk. I do not say that it is completely applicable to our domestic scene, (though the phrase ' monolith of tradition ' sounds dangerously applicable), or that the traditional programme should be rejected. But it may be that teachers have been keeping too rigidly to the Department syllabus in the past, which, in fact, was never meant to be a restriction on their ingenuity or enterprise, and was certainly never meant to be the *ne plus ultra* (which it sometimes is) to readings in prose and poetry. A more extensive attempt should be made to introduce pupils to ' the best knowledge, the best ideas of their time ', in Arnold's phrase, and this can hardly be done by stopping short at 1900, or merely introducing them to the very safe contemporaries like Hopkins, Belloc, and Chesterton.

But, above all, there must be far more concentration on what we have been calling ' oral communication.' And this, as so often, is not an untried, new venture, but a return to the old. As it was put in the *Atlantic Monthly* : ' What must come if the English language is to be effectively taught in the schools is a revival of the trivium, the union of grammar, logic and rhetoric, done into modern English, and with the full enlistment of modern knowledge.'

Collaboration between School and University

Recently there has been evidence of considerable collaboration between English teachers in High Schools and Colleges in America to decide precisely what is expected of pupils in English when they arrive in College. An interesting article,[2] ' College Support for the High School English Teacher : The California Experiment ', by James J. Lynch, professor of English at Berkeley, gives the background of discussion and re-thinking on English teaching that preceded the well-publicized *Statement of the Departments of English on the Berkeley and Los Angeles campuses of the University of California.* Briefly, this document is an attempt on the part of High School teachers and College instructors to reach agreement on paper about the fundamentals of their profession,

[1] loc. cit
[2] *College English* 21.2, (Nov. '59), pp. 73-90, Hartford, Connecticut.

and is the work of the College English Association of the San Francisco Bay Area. Without being in any way dictatorial, they try to suggest the stage students should have reached in English at College entrance, corresponding say, to our Leaving Certificate. The preliminary questions the Association set itself were eminently sensible and practical :

1. Should it concentrate solely on the preparation of the college-bound student, and if it did, would that be doing a disservice to the terminal student ?

2. Should it attempt only a statement of principles, or should it suggest course contents also, and also perhaps even classroom methods ?

and 3. Should it regard itself as in any sense circumscribed by existing high school courses and practices, or should it attempt to characterize what it regarded as the ideal ?

(Need it be pointed out that this would serve as an excellent starting-point for an Association of English teachers in Ireland to work from, whenever they decide to get down to brass tacks.)

In regard to 1) the Association decided that the English course should serve all students, prospective College goers and terminal students, and that the purpose of English teaching was to provide training in clear and consecutive thinking, clear and vigorous expression, and thoughtful and imaginative reading. On 2) they decided, reluctantly one feels, to stick to principles (though these often prove to be merely ' platitudes—true, innocuous, and fruitless '), and to leave the further questions of What ? and How ? to the field workers themselves, the High School teachers.

On 3) they decided not to be circumscribed by existing programmes, for it was apparent that most teachers were ranging at their own sweet will over vast, ill-defined territories that included, in greater or less measure, such things as parliamentary procedure, current events, conversation in various social situations, ' free ' readings, and attitudes towards the mass-media.

Here we can only notice very briefly some of the points made in the *Statement*. The ' objective ' test, which has had such a vogue, is roundly deplored, and the importance of writing stressed and of frequent exercises to provide the student with the ability to write naturally and fluently. *Disciplined* expression should be the target, with its necessary concomitants, grammatical literacy, appropriate organization, and evaluation analysis. Courses in ' creative ' writing should be elective, and limited to students of superior gifts. This provision was meant to discourage teachers from giving premature ideas about short-story writing to students who should be doing drill on the subject and predicate of sentences. Under ' speaking ' it is urged that all students should learn to discuss and recite well, and this is considered as something apart from reading, which should aim at comprehending qualities like rhythm

and cadence in passages studied. In Literature it was felt that the study of selected masterpieces, contemporary and classical, should proceed on the assumption that the comprehensive knowledge of a few was preferable to a superficial knowledge of many. In sum, the *Statement* urged teachers to ' devote the available class-time to the best literature and to intensive discipline in the use of language,' or, more briefly, to the ' thoughtful teaching of literature and composition.'

In the same issue of *College English,*[1] Mrs Elaine Smith of the University of Massachusetts publishes the results of a questionaire enquiry conducted among English High School teachers of Massachusetts, which helps to fill in the picture of the present state of English in American High schools. In particular, it is worth noting what she discovered to be the general pattern of classroom readings. Very generally in the college-preparatory senior English classroom reading consisted of an anthology of British literature, (an Anthology of American literature is studied at what corresponds to our Intermediate level), Milton's minor poems, *Hamlet, Macbeth, Ethan Frome* or *The Mill on the Floss, Ivanhoe, The Return of the Native,* Macaulay's *Life of Johnson,* and essays. Required out-of-class reading varied from ten books a semester to none, and there was great variety in quality on the reading lists, even within the same list, which indicated that the teachers were not always sure what the students should read, a failing that may have universal application. Out-of-class reading is checked on by panel discussions or the written book reports, which in many schools seem to replace the essay, and often give students the false impression that they are already launched on real research or book reviewing. While many teachers deplored their slender library resources, others noted an extensive use of paperbacks, which improve daily in scope and quality, and some teachers reported that they circulated their own books among their students.

These are but a few of many indications in current writing of the serious re-thinking going on in American educational circles on the teaching of English. The collaboration between High School and College instructors deserves special notice and immediate emulation. (The Association of Classical teachers, based at University College, Dublin, has already set a worthy headline in this matter.) As Mrs Smith puts it : ' Mutual fact-finding should result in better teaching along the way. Local, regional, and state conferences are envisioned as an aid to this piercing of the slate curtain, until the chinks of light become a window.'

[1] ibid. 90-7.

Britain and Argentina in the Nineteenth Century

by JOHN MURRAY

FOR several years I have had an interest in the history and problems of Argentina, ever since I spent a considerable period there in 1947 and 1948. I have been very fortunate in retaining many valued personal contacts with that country and I have delved, as a sympathetic amateur, into its history. This interest has been recently stirred by a lengthy and very detailed work of Dr H. S. Ferns of the University of Birmingham.[1] In a preface Dr Ferns notes that half a century ago Alfred Marshall suggested to a group of his students that one of them ought to make a study of the growing British connection with the Argentine Republic. One of this original group repeated the suggestion in 1938 to Dr Ferns and persuaded him to undertake the task. The result is the present imposing volume, imposing because of the evident labour that has gone to its composition, the detailed and intricate political and economic treatment, and—not least—the balanced judgments that the author passes. Much of the book, notably the later chapters, is rather technical in character, dealing with actual British investment and the activities of joint-stock companies, the development of the Argentine railway system, the fortunes and misfortunes of British investors after the failure of the 1825 loan and the regime of Rosas and again in the troubled 1880's but the book has none the less a much wider and more general appeal. It tells the story of the developing British community in Argentina. '*British*' in this context means English and Scottish. The Irish connection with Argentina is another story altogether, which I tried to tell, at least in general outline, in a previous article in STUDIES.[2]

Now, I am not personally interested in the minutiae of British economic relations with Argentina but rather in the ebb and flow, the interplay, of political relations between the two countries, which in their turn of course were the basis for the economic association. These relations, to begin with, were within the framework of Anglo-Spanish rivalry. In the eighteenth century these were determined by two principal factors : the English desire for wider commercial opportunities and the Spanish determination to keep out foreigners and to utilize their New World resources for the benefit of Spain and Spaniards.

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[1] *Britain and Argentina in the Nineteenth Century*. By H. S. Ferns. Oxford : Clarendon Press. Pp. 517. 1960.

[2] 'Irishmen and Others in Argentina.' *Studies*, Vol. 38, p. 377.

The British broke down the Spanish monopoly through illicit trade, in which they were frequently abetted by the Spanish and Criollo settlers. They also established free ports on the fringe of the Spanish Empire. The British Parliament legislated in 1766 to set up several such ports, where foreign vessels, including Spanish ships, might discharge their cargoes in exchange for foreign goods. The British attempted also, and with no small measure of success, to penetrate into Spanish dominions through Portuguese Brazil. Brazil became the channel through which British wares found their way to Buenos Aires and as far afield as Paraguay and Peru. It should be observed that the Spaniards did not make use of the American revolt against England as did the French. For this there were probably three reasons. They were occupied at the time with a vast administrative reconstruction of the colonial Empire ; they were glad to utilize English embarrassment to deal with the Portuguese in Brazil ; and finally, with their high notions of loyalty to authority, they did not approve of revolution, even when it occurred in Protestant countries.

With the turn of the nineteenth century came a gradual change in English policy. The English had reached the limits of clandestine trade, and they were learning that any conquest of South America was impracticable. Britain conducted a campaign in the West Indies from 1794 to 1796 to consolidate her position and extend her influence. It proved very costly. Dr Ferns states that ' the cost was unbearable. More British troops were lost in three years in the West Indies than in the whole Peninsular war '. (p. 11). British efforts began to switch to helping Spanish subjects against Spain. Dr Ferns avoids the danger, to which Liberal historians have been prone, of blaming the loss of the Spanish Empire upon the lack of flexibility of Spanish administration. ' To attribute—he writes—to the political character of Spain and to its domination by an aristocratic monarchy and a dogmatic Church all the difficulties and weaknesses of the Spanish Empire on the eve of its demise is, however, an over-simplification. Nature, not man, determined some of the essentials of the life of the Spanish Empire.' (p. 13). He adds a penetrating comment which also explains the slowness of Latin American development through the nineteenth century, namely that the sub-continent was incapable of real development except with heavy investments of capital and an advanced technology that were not fully available till after 1900.

The British Invasions

Yet the history of Anglo-Argentine relations does begin with military conflict. This is of course known to every Argentine schoolboy and commemorated in street names like *Defensa* and *Reconquista* and in the captured flags of British regiments which are still preserved behind glass

almost reverently in the church of Santo Domingo in Buenos Aires. No doubt, the war atmosphere in Europe was responsible, and plans were circulating in Whitehall for operations against the Spanish colonies, since Spain was then closely partnered with France. These plans came suddenly to a head when Sir Home Popham found himself unoccupied with a naval squadron off Cape Town after fulfilling a mission in South Africa. He had previously, in 1804, given his opinion to Viscount Melville that the idea of conquering South America was preposterous but that ' the possibility of gaining *all* its prominent points, alienating it from its present European Connections, fixing on some Military position, and enjoying all its Commercial advantages can be reduced to a fair calculation, if not a certain operation '.[1] Popham was no mere adventurer but an experienced and seasoned naval commander. He had surveyed the coast of Penang and for various navigational exploits had been awarded a gold cup by the East India Company. He had also charted the mouth of the Hoogly river and planned its dockyards. For his work as surveyor, navigator and astronomer he was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society.

In 1806 his squadron sailed across the Southern Pacific towards South America. His intelligence was very faulty ; he had been informed that Montevideo, his original objective, was ill equipped and without artillery and also that the Spanish colonists were seething with desires for independence. He discovered that Montevideo was impregnable and he therefore made a surprise attack on Buenos Aires. The attack succeeded ; Sobremonte, the viceroy, fled the city. Popham was handicapped by the fact that the military commander, Beresford, was made his equal in rank and remained under the orders of the British commander at the Cape, Sir David Baird. Beresford had been told to establish himself as Lieutenant-Governor 'in and over the several Spanish Settlements at Rio de la Plata which may submit to His Majesty's arms, and to draw as such, the same salary and allowances, as may have been enjoyed by the Spanish Governor'. The intention was clearly to occupy and annex parts of South America. The local settlers—Spaniards and Criollos—soon expelled the British forces ; and when these were reinforced in the following year by troops under the command of General Whitelocke, they compelled the British to accept an armistice and withdraw altogether. Whitelocke's tactics were clumsy in the extreme ; his columns attempted to force their way through parallel streets between overhanging blocks of houses from the roofs of which they were subjected to murderous attack. I had tended to envisage Whitelocke as a ' Colonel Blimp ' of the early nineteenth century but, in Ferns's judgment, he emerges from his despatches and his subsequent court-martial as a

[1] Admiralty 1/58, Popham to Melville, October 14th, 1804, enclosed with Popham to Admiralty, April 30th, 1806 : cf. Ferns, p. 19.

very intelligent and perceptive man, with the fatal habit of listening to the counsel of men far less capable and intelligent than himself. The 'Blimp' in this particular operation was his second-in-command, Leveson Gore. This second attack on Buenos Aires cost the British 401 dead, 649 wounded and 1,924 prisoners.

Whitelocke made it clear in his reports home that the inhabitants of Buenos Aires had no desire for British domination. Writing to Windham at the War Office on 10 July, 1807, he stated that

> The nature of the fire to which the Troops were exposed was violent in the extreme. Grape Shot at the corners of all the Streets, musketry, hand grenades, Bricks and Stones from the tops of all the houses. Every householder with his Negroes defended his dwelling, each of which was in itself a Fortress ; and it is not too much to say, that the whole male population of Buenos Ayres was employed in its defence.

Some of Dr Ferns's judgments on the reaction of the people of Buenos Aires to these invasions are most illuminating, and they reverse the facile opinion, often entertained, that Spanish administration had left these people without initiative or experience, or that the people themselves were backward and primitive. 'It has been frequently alleged—he writes—that one of the supreme defects of the Spanish government of the Americas consisted in the political inexperience to which it condemned the people. If this is so, some at least of the inhabitants of Buenos Aires learned their basic political lessons with astonishing rapidity, and demonstrated a superiority of skill over Popham and Beresford in a very short space of time.' And, commenting upon the raising of an indigenous army, with a strong admixture of gauchos, he adds that 'the rapid constitution of this new [Criollo] force is evidence of the extraordinary vitality of the Buenos Airean community and the political capacity, courage and imagination of its leading personalities '.[1]

Of Liniers, commander of this local militia and subsequently viceroy prior to the war of independence, who outmanoeuvred Whitelocke both militarily and politically, he states that in his letter (to Whitelocke about conditions for an armistice) ' he displayed his astonishing powers both as a politician and a soldier ; a power to grasp whole situations and to act, which, if he had been privileged to exercise them in a larger theatre than the River Plate, would have earned him the reputation of a great captain and a great statesman '.[2]

The British attempt to seize Buenos Aires failed, and failed rather ignominiously. Yet, in another way, quite unintended by the invaders,

[1] Ferns. op. cit. pp. 30.32.
[2] Ferns : op. cit. p. 44.

it had a remarkable success. What later encouraged the inhabitants to proclaim their independence was precisely their successful defence of Buenos Aires in the interests of Spain. The British invasion made them realize what were their own potentialities. It was the first—and in the long run, perhaps, the most important—British contribution to Latin American independence.

The English Penetration

Dr Ferns's account begins with these invasions and continues with the wars of independence. But actually there were Englishmen to be discovered, not only in Buenos Aires but in quite remote places. A most entertaining volume was published in 1831 by the firm of Effingham Wilson at the Royal Exchange, of journeys made across Argentina and Chile from 1810 onwards by Mr Samuel Haigh. Mr Haigh was a delightful travelling companion. He has an appreciative eye for everything ; for opportunities of commerce, naturally, for he was an English merchant, but also for large and handsome churches, for the beauties of nature and for feminine elegance and charm. The large, dark eyes—he tells us—for which the Spanish beauties are so deservedly celebrated, ' occasionally shoot forth a volley of expression not often to be met with in more northern climes '. The men of the Rio de la Plata he considered to be ' brave, liberal and disinterested ' but a little proud and arrogant and ' a more frank, free, and independent being than the Gaucho [whom he met on his transcontinental journeys] does not exist '. ' The drivers and Gauchos whom we met, always moved their hats, with *vaya usted con Dios :* indeed they are habitually civil and polite, much more so than is usually found among the lower classes of an educated society in Europe '.[1] Mr Haigh does not appear to have suffered unduly from homesickness for his ' northern climes '.

From Buenos Aires he travelled on horse-back over the pampas to Mendoza. This city, nestling under the massive *Cordillera* of the Andes, rouses him to lyrical utterance : ' Were I to live,' his pen moves ecstatically, ' to the age of a pelican, I could never forget sweet Mendoza; whether it be the air, the inhabitants, or the country around, or all of these combined, I know not, but there is an indelible charm attached to that spot, which I shall retain " while memory holds its seat ".' But aesthetics do not dim his appreciation of Criollo hospitality and of the week he passed there ' amidst a continual round of diversions, provided for me by the amiable inhabitants of this delightful city, dancing riding, shooting and walking . . . and enjoying ices and the delightful breezes as they stole down the lofty sides of the snowy Cordillera '.[2]

[1] *Sketches of Buenos Ayres, Chile and Peru.* By Samuel Haigh. p. 68.
[2] Haigh : op. cit. p. 86.

In Mendoza he met Mr John Robinson, who had left Buenos Aires shortly before him, at the house of a Yorkshireman named Appleby who had a Mendozian wife. With Robinson and three of his servants Haigh tackled the arduous crossing of the Andes—on mule-back and with pack mules—and the travellers came across human bones and the remains of skirmishes between Spanish forces and the troops of General San Martín, in the mountains and on the plains of Chacabuco. He discovered, to begin with, twelve Englishmen in Santiago, all of whom were engaged in commerce except for Dr Cox who had practised medicine there for twenty years and had previously been a surgeon in the Russian navy. On the evening of Haigh's arrival, a ball was being given by the Argentine commander, San Martín, in honour of Commodore Bowles of the English Pacific squadron, whose frigate, the Amphion, was lying in the bay of Valparaiso. Haigh and Robinson were provided with tickets and the former was introduced to San Martín by Mr Richard Price. San Martín, Haigh noted, received him most affably ' for he is very partial to the English nation '. A few days afterwards, the number of British merchants had grown to twenty, who decided to raise a small force to protect their property in those troubled times. Their chief concern, according to Haigh, seems to have been for the cut and fashion of their uniform, and he is not impressed by their military qualities.

> As far as I remember the discussion was principally relative to what uniform would be the most imposing and becoming. One suggested that it should be something like that of the Black Brunswick Hussars, with the figure of a death's head and crossbones on the cap, but this was overruled, as being thought too gloomy. At last, I think, they decided that it should be a scarlet jacket, with yellow pantaloons, and a shako, with a white feather in it. This assembly never met again, for, as the advancing tide of war came rolling on, several discovered that their stomachs were not qualified for the ' science military ', and they were contented to remain in that pacific line of life to which it had been decreed they should be called.[1]

At this turn of history there were many Irishmen and Scots as well as Englishmen active in the wars of liberation : chief among them, Bernardo O'Higgins, known as the *Libertador* of Chile. Thomas Cochrane, later tenth Earl of Dundonald, created a Chilean fleet for San Martín and in the Rio de la Plata itself William Brown, an Irish sailor, improvised a navy for the Argentine Republic and became *Almirante* Brown of Argentine history. Madariaga in his classic biography of

[1] Haigh : op. cit. pp. 203–4.

Simon Bolivar says that the Northern war of independence was won for Latin America by Venezuelan generals and Irish colonels.[1]

A CHANGED POLICY

But to return to questions of politics. The advent of Castlereagh and his successor, Canning, changed the direction of British policy. Henceforward, all idea of military penetration was abandoned. The English objective was trade, but they were anxious and determined to prevent other Powers, especially the United States and France, from intervening politically in South America. Once Spain had broken with France and French forces had invaded the Iberian Peninsula, the British position was very delicate. Earlier, the government had certainly listened to, if it had not entertained, projects for encouraging revolt in the Spanish colonies and, as late as 1792, a plan had been considered, in conjunction with France and the U.S.A., for opening up the commerce of Spanish America and expelling the Spaniards from the New World.[2] But Spain was now an ally of England. Official policy had to support the Spanish cause in South America and to express disapproval of the campaign for liberation. Lord Liverpool, on 29 June, 1810, declared that it was the duty of His Majesty's Government 'according to every obligation of Justice and good Faith, to discourage any proceeding which may have the effect of separating the Spanish Provinces in America from the Parent State in Europe—the Integrity of the Spanish Monarchy upon principles of Justice and true Policy being not less the object of His Majesty than of all loyal and patriotick Spaniards'.[3] British mercantile interests were less interested in justice and principles of true policy than was Lord Liverpool, and in 1814 a treaty negotiated between Spain and Britain obliged the latter to prevent its subjects from furnishing 'arms, ammunition or any other warlike article to the revolted inhabitants in South America.' That the official prohibition was not effective is seen from a series of subsequent measures. In 1817 the Prince Regent issued a proclamation warning his subjects not to participate in the war between Spain and her colonies. Two years later, a Foreign Enlistment act was passed making it an

[1] Before we leave this genial traveller, it may be worth while quoting Haigh's opinion of the Jesuits in South America. 'There is in Santiago a convent, built by the Jesuits. Indications of the surprising industry and intelligence of that extraordinary sect are to be met with all over Spanish America. The account of the astonishing obstacles they have surmounted, in improving the cultivation and buildings of the country they have settled in, and in converting the native Indians, would fill a volume; and although their exertions tended principally towards increasing the dignity of their own body, which excited the jealousy of the Spanish court, yet I question whether their annihilation was conducive to the interests of the country at the period it occurred. Their intelligence and industry were the theme of universal praise, and certainly have not since been supplied.' (pp. 140-1).

[2] cf. *Historical Evolution of Hispanic America.* By J. Fred Rippy. Third edition, 1945. F. S. Crofts and Co., New York.

[3] Quoted by Robertson in *The Beginnings of Spanish-American Diplomacy* in Turner, *Essays in American History,* p. 240.

offence to enlist in England for foreign service or even to enter foreign service at all.

Official policy veered towards a position of neutrality, and Britain attempted to intervene between the colonies and the Spanish government. Canning welcomed the Monroe declaration of 1822 because it excluded France from South America but he was not happy about possible U.S. penetration into the Spanish New World. The British recognition of the new States of Latin America was accelerated by Canning's fears of French and United States influence, and at the time the latter Power loomed larger in his thoughts. 'The other and perhaps still more powerful motive' [for encouraging British investment in South America], he wrote in a memorandum, 'is my apprehension of the ambition and ascendancy of the United States of America: it is obviously the policy of that Government to connect itself with all the Powers of America in a general Transatlantic League, of which it would have the sole direction. I need only say how inconvenient such an ascendancy may be in time of peace, and how formidable in case of war.' After he had forced through his policy of recognition for the new States, he wrote to Granville: 'The deed is done, the nail is driven. Spanish America is free; and if we do not mismanage our affairs, *she is English*.'[1] Canning is speaking on the level of economics and commerce.

After Independence

Once the wars of liberation came to an end, British influence grew rapidly in the new Argentina. In 1824 there were 1,355 registered English persons in the republic; this number had increased by 1831 to 4,072. They were not all of the commercial class. 1,422 were women. Of the 2,650 earning incomes, only 466 were merchants or clerks but their wealth and influence were out of proportion. 193 were shopkeepers; 1,245 were listed as artisans, master mechanics, carpenters, bricklayers and labourers. The English community was predominantly Protestant. In 1822 British imports into Buenos Aires amounted to more than five million dollars—50.9 per cent. of a total of eleven million. Imports from Brazil were 12.5 per cent. and from the U.S.A. 12 per cent. These British imports were largely textiles to 85 per cent., and Haigh reported in 1810 that he had noted cotton goods in Buenos Aires from Glasgow, Paisley, Huddersfield, Leeds and Wakefield. In 1824 British exports to the Rio de la Plata exceeded £1,000,000; 27 per cent. of the ships and 23 per cent. of the tonnage entering Argentine ports were British. Investors in London had taken up Argentine bonds to the face value of £1,000,000.

Yet, despite this most favourable start a period of stagnation and

[1] Rippy: op. cit., p. 366.

frustration followed. In 1850 the value of British exports to Argentina was less than £1,000,000 and it had surpassed the 1824 total only on one occasion between 1824 and 1850. That was in 1849. In bad years such as 1827 and 1845 the value of exports declined as low as £200,000. Till 1863 Argentina was a less important market for Britain than Brazil, not as good as Chile, and in no way to be compared with Australia. North American, French and German trade grew more quickly than did the British.

What were the reasons for this decline after so promising a beginning? A very liberal treaty was concluded between Britain and Argentina in 1825 and a generous loan provided. The treaty did not seek a specially favoured status for British residents and merchants but left them under the jurisdiction of the Argentine government. The two countries were to remain on an equal footing. Rivadavia, the leading minister, encouraged foreign investment. But the fortunes of some of the investors proved none too happy. The rights over certain mining properties were assigned by the Federal and a provincial government to two different companies; and a British expert, who visited the properties, reported that the working of mines in this area by Englishmen was politically unsafe and that even if no such risk existed, the expenses would far outweigh the costs. Conditions outside Buenos Aires were still too uncertain for secure development. Further, Argentine domestic politics were often troublesome. In a note to the Argentine minister in London, Palmerston once described the ruling political club at Buenos Aires as a 'ferocious gang of murderers' and deplored the fact that 'no elevation of Rank afforded protection against these Ruffians, and no humbleness of condition gave security.' The first British minister to Buenos Aires, Sir John Ponsonby, hated the city. He spoke of it as 'the vilest place I ever saw,' and added: 'I certainly should hang myself if I could find a tree tall enough to swing on . . . it is a beastly place.'

This is not a little unfair to Buenos Aires and even to the politicians. But conditions were worsened and made insecure by the struggle between Argentina and Brazil for the Banda Oriental, a territory on the Northern shore of the Rio de la Plata which is now Uruguay, and the far more complicated and drawn-out conflict between Brazil and Argentina in the eighteen thirties and forties which was at the same time a strife between *Federalistas* and *Unitarios* in Argentina and *Blancos* and *Colorados* in the Banda Oriental. This latter conflict involved the land blockade of Montevideo and frequently also a sea blockade of Buenos Aires, though this sea or river blockade was challenged on occasions by the British and generally ignored by the ships of the United States. Figures, however, tell their tale. In 1825, 95 British vessels had entered Argentine harbours and 85 had sailed from them. Owing to the Brazilian blockade,

that number fell in 1826 to 7 and in 1827, as low as one. In 1826, 23 ships departed during a period of grace allowed by the Brazilian naval commander ; in 1827, again only one was able to leave. Incidentally, one result of the blockade was the growth of provincial industries, and this in its turn favoured the cause of the *Federalistas,* opposed to the centralizing tendencies of the capital and demanding a federal constitution. This constitutional question, with its manifold implications, disturbed the provinces of the Rio de la Plata for more than fifty years.

A further reason for the slow development of British commerce was the wide division in thought and outlook between Buenos Aires and the inland provinces. It was not merely a matter of conflicting interests, of industry and commerce against land. One source of the revolt against Spain had been the pressure of new ideas from Europe, revolutionary from France and liberal from England. Freemasonry had also played its part. The spirit of Buenos Aires was, on the whole, rationalist, liberal and progressive. Rivadavia was its protagonist and incorporation. It aimed at education and enlightenment, in the eighteenth-century meaning of those expressions. But, as Dr Ferns points out, the provincials were anything but liberal, in this sense. The gauchos (and they were typical of their *caudillo* leaders)

> had some very imperfect ideas concerning the Christian religion, but they entertained none the less a strong feeling of hostility to men who worshipped strange gods unknown to them or who did not worship any gods at all. They had no feeling whatever for gods whose magic resided in dull and unmanly institutions such as schools and universities. They loved a Man who suffered and died bravely, who was a part of God, who rose again and whose power and glory came to everyone in the Host, whose presence they could seek when impelled to do so. That was the long and short of religion for the gauchos, and they cared nothing at all for the morality, discipline, gentleness and subterfuge with which townsmen cluttered up the worship of God and impaired the liberty of men. Rivadavia, the liberal revolutionary, proposed to build schools and he was driven out ; Rosas, the gaucho revolutionary, built churches and he endured.[1]

Rivadavia had, however, realized that it was necessary to introduce labour in order to give the country a balanced economy or even to provide any stable economy at all. There was little for export except silver and hides to counterbalance necessary imports ; and home production was disastrously low. The Brazilians captured the sugar market ; the North Americans that for flour ; the French and Spanish that for wine. In Buenos Aires in the eighteen twenties a pound of butter cost

[1] Ferns : op. cit., p. 85.

more than a sheep and an egg more than either. Strangely unconscious of the character of later immigration into Argentina, Rivadavia was hoping for the advent of ' familias industriosas . . . de qualquiera punta de Europa, *en especial de las naciones del Norte* '. An attempt was made to introduce Scottish colonists by John Parish Robertson and his brother, William. They purchased 16,000 acres of land near the capital. Colonists were recruited in South West Scotland, and these included farmers, bricklayers, blacksmiths, gardeners and farm labourers, with a doctor, an architect and some land surveyors. Two hundred of them, all Presbyterians, sailed from Leith in May, 1825. The colony eventually failed ; it was plundered by soldiery in 1829, and many of its members went to Buenos Aires to start industries of their own and become wealthy men.

Argentina throughout the nineteenth century was quite unlike most European countries and unlike the United States or Canada or Australia. Its dominant class was landowning, not the liberal and commercial community. The land owners acquired more and more land but, at the same time, they became increasingly dependent on foreign capital. They had, moreover, no sufficient labour force to make good use of the capital, and thus they became a debtor class. Investments generally failed, in the sense that they brought little or no practical return to the foreign investor. Hence, the financial difficulties after the British loan of 1825 and the economic crisis of the late eighties, when the British government and the Bank of England had to be brought in to underwrite British investment in Argentina. The construction of the railways, that did so much to open up the vast countryside and eventually stimulate great agricultural and pastoral activity, did not at once alter the situation for, to begin with, many railways were costly and unproductive ; they were, on the one hand, a gesture of faith in the country's future development and, on the other hand, a further means of increasing the large but still, in many a respect, the unfruitful wealth of the *estancieros*. It was only in 1890 with the foundation of the *Union Civica Radical* that a growing commercial and professional middle class was able to challenge the political and economic hegemony of the land owners.

The Rosas interlude from 1828 to 1852 saw the victory of the *Federalistas* and the *estancieros* and the corresponding defeat of the liberal, commercial interests. Rosas himself was an extraordinary figure, with much of the technique of a twentieth-century *Führer* or *Duce*; he was an expert propagandist and he had his private army in the *Mazorca*. But he was a shrewd, if also an unscrupulous, man, able to outmanoeuvre the French and British during the war with Montevideo. Indeed, so skilful was his propaganda that he could persuade foreign critics and opponents to support his regime, on the grounds that it was

the only alternative to chaos—an argument that has a surprisingly twentieth-century ring. Towards the close of Rosas' rule, Henry Southern, British representative in Buenos Aires, could write as follows to Palmerston :–

> It is not wise to judge lightly the motives of a man who has discovered the means of governing one of the most turbulent and restless people in the world, and with such success that, though there is much cause for complaint, and not a little discontent, still the death or fall of General Rosas would be considered by every man in the Country as the direst misfortune. It certainly would be the signal of disorder and of intestine quarrels which could reduce the Country to misery. (10 January, 1851).[1]

British policy towards Argentina in the nineteenth century was normally faithful to the directives that had been laid down by Castlereagh and Canning. It was aimed at friendly relations with the Argentine government on terms of equality, and its purpose was to secure the freest and fairest conditions possible for British commerce and investment. This involved from time to time delicate adjustments and unceasing vigilance to avoid being caught up by any particular political group or interest and to see that British representatives and commanders on the spot were not guilty of imprudent action. Government instructions to British representatives again and again iterate this position. Yet in the middle eighteen forties the policy did slip under pressure from mercantile interests. A *Memorandum on British Trade,* published in 1841, called attention to the great expansion of British opportunities that had occurred at Montevideo, then in a state of hostilities with Buenos Aires. The memorandum suggested that secret offers of ' succour ' should be made to the Montevideo government, to win from it a treaty securing to British commerce ' those privileges and that protection which Great Britain seeks under the usual Treaties of Commerce '. The term ' succour ' was clearly understood to mean ' a small amount of force . . . sufficient to defend Montevideo against External aggression '. This involved a departure from neutrality and it meant that Britain was taking sides in a South American quarrel. Ouseley, the British representative in Buenos Aires, was a weak and unsuitable agent. He joined the French envoy in ordering the British and French naval commanders to forestall the final Argentine attack on Montevideo, at a moment when 15,000 British and French residents in Buenos Aires had signed a petition of protest against this Anglo-French policy. In the meantime, British exports to Buenos Aires fell, in 1845, to £592,279 and in 1846, to £187,481.

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[1] Ferns : op. cit., p. 214.

THE NEW ERA

With the fall of Rosas, Argentina entered gradually into a new era : gradually, for the struggle between *Federalistas* and *unitarios* continued through two further decades, and for several years there was active conflict between Buenos Aires and the provinces which set up their capital at Paraná. However, the pattern of Argentina was being transformed. The gauchos were passing ; pastoral life gave way to agriculture, and soon railways began to open up the rich hinterland. In all this development, political as well as economic, the English had a very considerable and, on the whole, a very fruitful share.[1]

Commerce now developed swiftly. The Argentine State was encouraging the investment of foreign money through public guarantees. A law of 5 September, 1862 laid down conditions under which railway concessions might be granted. Within three years British businessmen and engineers had established banks and railway and tramway services, to be followed soon afterwards by public utility companies such as gasworks, waterworks and sewerage systems. This phase lasted till 1875 when a depression slowed down the process, and it has been estimated that in that year British capital in Argentina amounted to £23,000,000, apart from further capital invested in land and the normal commercial import and export activity. The first railway concession went to William Wheelwright, an American, a man with thirty years of experience of steam navigation on the Pacific shores of South America, who undertook the building of the Central Argentine Railway. Most of the other leading figures were Englishmen, like Edward Lumb, who had the original contract for the Buenos Aires Great Southern Railway, Thomas Armstrong, a director of the Central Railway, Frank Parish, son of Woodbine Parish, the first British Consul-General in Argentina after independence and G. W. Drabble. The Argentinians themselves did not make large investments in these railways. The initiative came from mercantile groups in the city of London. On the application papers to inaugurate the Great Southern and the Central Railways, and the Bank of London and the River Plate were twenty-two names : thirteen were described as merchants of the city of London ;

[1] Ferns's comment from the political standpoint is worth recording : ' In describing the British diplomacy in the River Plate between the years 1852-1862 as successful, one must be careful not to ascribe too much meaning to the word. British diplomacy can be counted successful in that it contributed to the achievement of business opportunities which influential British interests sought, but it must not be inferred that British diplomacy achieved an exclusive power of decision for Britain in that area, or that it was based upon preponderant and unmistakable force. Quite the contrary. British diplomacy consisted in a skilful participation in the politics of the Argentina community giving a little support to this interest and removing a little from that, careful always not to commit what little strength Britain possessed in the area unreservedly to any particular faction and determined always to preserve the appearance of non-interference. If the art of diplomacy consists in inducing others to take decisions one wishes to see them take, then the British agents in Argentina at this time practised that art to great effect.' (p. 293)

two were bankers ; two gentlemen ; two members of Parliament ; one railway contractor ; one army officer ; and one civil engineer.

After many sharp fluctuations in the seventies, with the eighteen eighties came the full floodtide. Prior to 1880 British investment in joint-stock companies in Argentina had reached £25,000,000. By 1885 it had risen to £45,000,000 and at the close of the decade to £150,000,000. Some authorities placed it even higher, for example, the Commercial Secretary to the British Legation at more than £200,000,000, the President of the Republic at £250,000,000. The year 1889 was an *annus mirabilis* when Argentina absorbed between 40 and 50 per cent. of all British funds invested outside the United Kingdom.

Meanwhile, Argentine industries developed but not at sufficient speed to cater for the demands of a rapidly soaring population ; the new immigration was now in full swing. The internal market was expanding so quickly that it could scarcely keep up with domestic needs. In 1881 and 1882 no wheat from Argentina entered the British market. At the same time, British exports of iron and steel to Argentina increased. Imports into Argentina outran exports. The economic balance was increasingly tilted against her. The result was a crisis in 1885. Carlos Pellegrini, an old Harrovian and on his mother's side a kinsman of John Bright, concluded an agreement with European bankers which in return for a large loan gave them a mortgage on customs houses in Argentina and undertook to borrow no more money except with the bankers' consent. Yet the government was unable to control borrowing by provincial administrations or by private enterprise. Corruption was rife. Public works were undertaken not always for the general welfare or convenience but for individual profit or percentage. Issues of paper currency increased purchasing power but wages did not rise in proportion. An attempt to cut wages reduced immigration from Europe which declined from 220,000 in 1889 to 30,000 in 1891. Colonization in Argentina had been usually a two or three term process. Immigrants arrived from Spain, Italy, Germany or Ireland, with a small grant from the Argentine treasury. They became, to begin with, wage workers and these wages were the means by which they eventually purchased or had some share in land and started to grow wheat or buy cattle. Any lessening of the real value of wages affected land development and then immigration itself. By July, 1890 the tide of immigration had come to a standstill. In March and April, 1891, the British minister reported discontent, unemployment and dire poverty owing to the great cost of the primary necessities of life. The unemployed were compelled to seek refuge in the countryside, not as settlers but as *peones*. And in spite of this, the flow of British investment did not cease and thus aggravated an already dangerous situation. In 1889 an estimated 40

per cent. of British investment funds were directed towards Argentina.

Yet in the long run Argentina reasserted itself. Hard work at low wages produced the raw material and goods to offset the flow of imports and the demands of investors. Nature proved very kind in 1890 and from 1892 onwards there was a series of good years. The receipts from exports for the years 1890–5 were nearly £21,000,000 greater than in the years 1884–9. A new government curbed public expenditure. Under Vicente Lopez as Finance Minister, the banks were compelled to study their real situation and to restrict credit. Customs duties on tobacco, clothing, carriages and works of art were increased to 60 per cent., while they were reduced to 10 and 5 per cent. on productive machinery and equipment. The *Banco Nacional* was liquidated and the State banks severely censured for lending money without proper security. In April, 1891 the President in his annual message announced drastic economies. A number of redundant officials were dismissed, the budget of the Foreign Office was halved, certain fraudulent land sales annulled and railway concessions abrogated. The formation of the *Union Civica* acted as a tonic upon the government and the crisis was gradually brought under control. The nineteenth century ended on a note of great relief from this perilous position and of confidence in the future in a land so rich with resources and possibilities.

Dr Ferns ends this study of the relations in that century between Britain and Argentina with an entertaining paragraph.

> If our story ends happily at least for some, it also ends on a note of comedy. The Welshmen settled in the Chubut (that is, on the Atlantic coast of Patagonia) had become Argentine citizens. As such they were obliged to serve fifteen days a year in the militia. Unfortunately the Argentine government regarded Sundays as appropriate days for the performance of military duties. Two imaginative and perhaps ambitious inhabitants of the colony thought the solution of Sunday drilling was incorporation in the British Empire. They went to Britain to spread the gospel of annexation of Patagonia. The Argentine government charged them with high treason. A Welsh member asked a question in the House. The President of the Republic visited the Chubut. All was put right. The Welsh-speaking citizens of the Republic resident in Patagonia would drill for fifteen days in December, Sundays excluded. H.M.S. Pegasus visited the colony. The captain reported all quiet, and all residents loyal to the Argentine Republic. Away in the countryside a retired admiral named Brent complained to the Foreign Office about the miseries and injustices of Welshmen in Patagonia. The Foreign Office gave the admiral the facts gathered by the best of authorities—a senior officer in the Royal Navy. The old admiral replied that he thanked God for the prosperity which was reported to him, but he still thought a Welsh Republic under Argentine sovereignty might constitute a suitable compromise.[1]

[1] Ferns : op. cit., p. 484.

The Twentieth Century

The crisis of the eighteen nineties ushered in a new period of high prosperity in Anglo-Argentine relations. And, be it said, Argentina has derived benefits beyond assessment from this British connection. In spite of some stormy passages, mainly associated with Agentina's own difficulties with other South American States, these relations have been peaceful and friendly, and beneficial to both partners. The British community in Argentina has won and preserved great respect, and expressions like *ora inglesa* and *palabra inglesa* are a current tribute to the business reliability and the honesty and trustworthiness of the British.

Between 1900 and 1914 Britain was Argentina's best customer and occupied the first place as supplier of the Argentine market. Prior to 1890 Argentina had on balance sold to Britain much less than she had bought from her. The position was reversed after 1900. In 1913 Britain imported Argentine goods to the extent of £40,726,496 and exported only £18,589,272 in goods to Argentina. The Argentine economy expanded rapidly. Cereal production was increased from three to fourfold. The weight of wool, meat and butter grew with more advanced techniques. More British money poured into the country. The estimated £190,000,000 of British investments in 1900 had become £290,000,000 in 1911. An easier political situation encouraged this development.

Yet this prosperity contained within itself some seeds of later tension, such as came to a head during the Peronista regime. Professor Lerini voiced this criticism in his study of the public indebtedness of Argentina. 'All the industrial, commercial, agricultural and mining companies which furnish our Argentine statistics bear the foreign mark *limited* ; so that one ends by getting the impression that one is studying a purely English colony, for one finds *limited* upon all species of manufactures ; *limited* after the statement of capitals ; all undertakings are *limited* ; insurance is *limited* ; the circulation and distribution of Argentine wealth is *limited*.' It could be argued—and the Peronistas argued it with some vehemence—that Argentina in the nineteenth century was merely a British colony and belonged to Britain's unofficial empire. Such an accusation may be partially true in actual fact ; the two countries were inextricably associated, and the one provided raw material and food, the other manufactured goods and technical and financial services. Such an accusation runs inevitably parallel with the charge of *colonialism* levelled against certain European Powers. Yet it could be answered very convincingly that colonialism, whatever its excesses and defects, was a necessary stage in the development of younger and less advanced peoples and that, if the colonial Power drew advantages and profit from the association, so also did the younger countries. In the case of

Argentina, this answer is reinforced by the fact that, whereas the Argentine government was always able to exert pressure, economic and if needs be military, upon British commerce and the British community, the government at Westminster was unable to exert similar pressure upon Argentina. The only occasion on which the Westminster government went beyond talk in dealing with Argentina was during the troubled period of General Rosas ; in this they were defeated and formally admitted their defeat. The British investor and trader in Argentina received his assistance, not from the British but from the Argentine government. When the British government finally felt obliged to assist British investors in Argentina, it did so, not by sending an expeditionary force to the Rio de la Plata, but by underwriting the Bank of England, which in turn underwrote the private and joint-stock banks, which in their turn underwrote the firm of Baring Brothers.

Book Reviews

CHRISTIAN UNITY

ONE FOLD. Essays and documents to commemorate the Golden Jubilee of the Chair of Unity Octave 1908–1958. Edited by Edward F. Hanahoe, S.A., S.T.D., and Titus F. Cranny, S.A., S.T.D., M.A. Chair of Unity Apostolate : Graymoor, N.Y. 1959. $6.50.

' The measure of our concern for unity is the degree to which we pray for it . . . We urge, wherever possible, the observance of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, January 18–25 (or some other period suited to local conditions) as a public testimony to prayer as the road to unity '. Taken not from some papal document nor from any other Catholic source but from the *Evanston Report* of the World Council of Churches, this quotation illustrates in rather striking fashion the remarkable progress which has been made by the January octave of prayer for Christian Unity in the fifty years of its existence commemorated in the volume under review. The hopes expressed by the founder, Lewis Thomas Wattson, in 1908 ' that this Church Unity observance so auspiciously begun may be kept with increasing enthusiasm by increasing numbers year after year ' have been amply realized. And not only has the January octave succeeded in establishing itself firmly both within and without the Catholic Church, it has also succeeded to a large extent in its ultimate object : the promotion of Christian unity. The fifty or so years of the Octave's existence have seen the conscience of the Christian world awaken to the contradiction and scandal of its unchristian disunity ; they have seen the Ecumenical Movement with all its various institutions and activities both Catholic and non-Catholic grow strong and expand. Reunion is still a long way off but relatively speaking the progress already realized is very great, and it has taken place, as the 1949 Instruction of the Holy Office expressly states, ' under the inspiring grace of God, due chiefly to the common prayers of the faithful ', and not least, we may surely think, to the January Octave of prayer.

In the essay entitled ' The Chair of Unity Octave : 1908–1958 ' which he has contributed to *One Fold,* Fr Cranny brings to light the interesting fact that in the beginning there were no specific intentions for the different days of the Octave and that these underwent various modifications before reaching in 1913 the form hitherto most widely in use among Catholics. This is all the more interesting in view of the fact that the intentions have now received a further official modification which was foreshadowed in an article by Fr C. Boyer, S.J. in the Summer number of *Unitas* and made public in the Autumn number of the same review. According to this new formulation, the intention for the opening day of the Octave is no longer ' Recognition by all Christians of the Chair of Peter as the divinely constituted Centre

of Unity ' (1911) nor ' The return of all the " other sheep " to the one Fold of Peter, the One Shepherd ' (1913) but ' The union of all Christians in the one true Faith and in the Church '. On 19 Jan. we no longer pray for ' Oriental sects ' (1912) or ' Oriental separatists ' (1913) but for ' separated Eastern Christians ' and their ' return to communion with the Holy See '. The intention for 20 Jan. no longer reads: 'The reception of all members of the Anglican Church into Peter's Fold ' (1911) nor ' The submission of Anglicans to the authority of the Vicar of Christ ' (1913) but ' The reconciliation of Anglicans with the Holy See'. This same wording is also used in the new formulation of the intention for 21 Jan. when we pray for European Protestants : the phrase ' return to Holy Church ' (1913) is now replaced by ' reconciliation with the Holy See '. Again on 24 Jan. it is no longer ' the salvation of the Jews ' (1911) for which we pray, nor ' the conversion of the Jews ' (1913) but ' That the Jewish people come into their inheritance in Jesus Christ '. And the intention for the last day of the Octave no longer reads : ' The conversion of the entire heathen world ' (1912) nor ' The missionary conquest of the world for Christ ' (1913) but ' The missionary extension of Christ's kingdom throughout the world '.

Some at least of these modifications seem to reveal a closer attention to the niceities of theological thought and expression. But in general they were made because 'expressions that were quite customary at the time of their origin have shifted in connotation and have assumed overtones that were nos originally intended'. As such these modifications in the wording of the Octave't intentions recall the revisions made in the Holy Week liturgy by the present Holy Father when he had certain phrases altered that might cause offence to Jews.

It does not seem that these latest developments in the history of the Chair of Unity Octave are the result of the recent suppression of the Feast of St Peter's Chair at Rome, 18 Jan. As Fr Hanahoe points out in his essay ' The Papal Emphasis in the Octave ', the distinctive feature of the Octave as conceived by the founder is its insistance on communion with the Holy See as an essential element in Christian unity. It was precisely to emphasize this point that Wattson, quite unaware apparently that liturgists were already advocating its suppression, chose the feast of St Peter's Chair at Rome on 18 Jan. as the opening day of the Octave. Unfortunately therefore the suppression of this feast means that the date of the Octave has lost its whole *raison d'être,* and its title and theology their liturgical inspiration and support. This change, I gather from a reliable Roman source, came as a surprise and disappointment to the Octave's sponsors, and representations were made. The feast however is not to be restored. Though its observance on 18 Jan. has a long history (our three Irish martyrologies mention it on this date) it remains (for reasons too complicated to enter into here) a liturgical anomaly which cannot any longer be allowed. The date of the Octave will not as a result be changed. I gather however that a decree may shortly be expected which will permit a votive Mass of the feast to be celebrated in connection with the Octave, doubtless with the privileges of votive Masses of the second class. In any case the suppression of the feast is compensated by the fact that Ordinaries are now free to prescribe for 18 Jan. (and in any case all priests are free to say on that day) the votive Mass hitherto entitled *ad tollendum*

schisma and henceforth to be given the title *Missa pro unitate Ecclesiae.* As a liturgical text this Mass is far richer and more beautiful. Besides, its *oratio* makes explicit mention of communion with the Holy See as an essential element of Christian unity. It thus provides the Octave with alternative liturgical inspiration for its ' papal emphasis ' and has the added advantage of putting this in its proper larger context.

Almost a quarter of a century has passed since our Irish bishops in synod formally approved for this country the observance of the Chair of Unity Octave. A reminder of this fact appears each year in the diocesan *Ordo* and, it is to be hoped, in those of Religious as well. For all who wish to act on this reminder and celebrate the Octave either privately or publicly, the essays contained in *One Fold* will be of great help. Dealing with the history and special character of the Octave and with the wider ecumenical context in which it is set, they provide very useful material for appropriate sermons and talks and meditations. For this reason *One Fold* can be warmly recommended.

MICHAEL HURLEY

THE GREEK EAST AND THE LATIN WEST: a study in the Christian Tradition. By Philip Sherrard. London: Oxford University Press. 1960. Pp. viii, 202. 25s.

THE subject matter of this book is exciting, and the writing is most impressive from the first. Mr Sherrard obviously has thought deeply about his subject matter. The metaphysical roots of two different attitudes of mind, two outlooks, which have led not merely to the division between Latin and Greek Christianity, but have profoundly affected the history of ideas, and hence the whole of European history—this advertisement gives some idea of the scope of Mr Sherrard's work. The dangers of this kind of comprehensive view are obvious. Facts are obstinate, and one may be tempted to select, to omit, to edit, in view of the main thesis. The opening chapter sees the contrast of Roman and Greek as a prolongation of the Platonic and Aristotelean world outlook. Much that is said is true, and it is all very plausible, but Plato wrote more than the *Republic* and his later development is not taken into account.

The second chapter on the ' Advent and Form of Christianity ' begins well with some discussion of the problem which faced the Church when the Emperor became Christian. The Church is presented as transcending the merely social order, and as being more than a merely ' historical religion '. It is not quite clear what the author has in mind here, unless he means that on this point Christianity is to be contrasted with the Mosaic Law, in that it is ' the interior and metaphysical reality of Christianity which Christ revealed '.

There follows an exposition of the main doctrines of Christianity ; one is first of all suspicious and then quite taken aback to realize that Mr Sherrard is presenting the Palamite doctrine as the teaching of the Church. A fourteenth-

century Eastern theologian, who teaches that the uncreated powers and energies of God are (really) distinct from His ultimate nature or essence, is introduced blandly in the same context as St Basil as a witness of Christian tradition. The theologian in question, Gregory Palamas, styled 'Saint' here according to anti-Latin, Orthodox practice, has much that is sound on our negative knowledge of God and His absolute transcendence, but on the distinction of essence and energies in God, which Mr Sherrard presents as the Christian solution to the problem posed by God's transcendence and yet His immanence in creation, he is heretical. Anti-Latin politics, not considerations of ecclesiastical tradition, reversed the earlier sentence of condemnation passed against him in the East. One finishes reading this chapter rather shaken in one's assurance of Mr Sherrard's competence to give a clear picture of Christian tradition.

The third chapter, which deals with the schism between the Latins and the Greeks, begins with a rather involved disquisition on the necessarily imprisoning effects of dogmatic definitions. These definitions were forced on the early Church by heresy, but there was danger that these incomplete statements of the Christian faith would become a block to future development. This, we learn, is what happened to the Latins. The *Filioque* discussions of Florence are presented wholly from the Greek Orthodox point of view, with no corresponding presentation of the Latin arguments. At least, one would have the impression that the Latins had abandoned earlier tradition from this chapter, were it not for the fact that Father Gill's exposition of the Council of Florence is fresh in our minds. Mr Sherrard, however, though he refers to Fr Gill's edition of the *Acta* of Florence, simply states that, in view of the two divergent outlooks 'discussions with a view to unity failed to achieve their purpose' (p. 71). He also maintains that the Latin view-point 'does indicate . . . a definite spiritual retrogression'. The Latin view-point also, apparently, implies 'a further subordination of Christian dogma to the norms of precisely that mentality', that is, the philosophical mentality. We may note also that the Palamite position features in Mr Sherrard's exposition of the Greek position on the *Filioque*—which might have surprised the Greek Fathers of Florence. Thus far the differences in doctrinal emphasis between Latins and Greeks. Now we consider their rival conceptions of ecclesiastical organization and authority. Naturally, the Latin idea of the primacy of Rome is seen to reflect the Latin concern with the absolute simplicity of the divine nature. Here again one feels rather lost in an almost allegorical interpretation of facts. But Mr Sherrard does develop a worth-while idea when he stresses his position (rather the post-Tridentine Orthodox position), against 'this "degeneration" of the essentially sacramental understanding of the Church, and its displacement in the Latin West in the later Middle Ages by the idea of the Church as a social and corporational organism' (p. 87). The two aspects of the Church are not mutually exclusive, as one might be led to believe from the text, but undoubtedly the 'sacramental idea' of the Church was submerged in the West until modern times, when the Church was free from post-Reformation troubles,—and also free from the circumstances which led to the formulation of curial compilations on the *plenitudo potestatis*. Mr Sherrard is not fair to

the West, and his thesis apparently allows him to mix centuries and whole movements of thought in order to undermine the Latin Church.

What happened to the Greek Orthodox Church after the fall of Constantinople in 1453 is presented thus : the Greek Patriarch and the bishops became officials of State, becoming involved in the same way as their brethren in the West with the merely temporal. The purely ' sacramental Church ', as envisaged by the author, is submerged. The reaction to this is presented in the life and teaching of Plethon, who led what is described as the Platonic reaction in the East. One may be tempted to feel that he receives more notice than the size of this book in proportion to its subject-matter warrants, but let it be said that this chapter makes interesting reading throughout.

The retrogression of Christian thought in the Middle Ages, especially in the West, was to prepare the ground for the rational spirit of Descartes, the counterpart in the West of Plethon in the East. The modern revolution, the fragmentation of ancient unity, stems from this reaction. Christianity in both East and West had lost its authentic ' sacramental ' character. Rationalism had ruined both East and West ; the merely temporal had engulfed the Church. The result is either the secular idealism of Plethon or the materialism which has shaped so much of modern Greece. It may be remarked that much of the last chapter is concerned with an illustration from the history of modern Greece of this conclusion.

It is hard to assess this book. It is confused and unconvincing, but it is certainly stimulating. Mr Sherrard, though he does not say so, would seem to hold that both the Greek East and the Latin West must develop their grasp of what he calls the ' sacramental Church ' if they are to succeed against present-day materialism. Shorn of its specious unity, a replay of the old Plato-Aristotle contrast, this book contains much that is worth-while, and should provoke theologians to answer the many questions which the author by implication raises.

PATRICK O'CONNELL

SOUTH AMERICAN DEVELOPMENTS

POLITICAL CHANGE IN LATIN AMERICA. By John J. Johnson. Stanford University Press. Pp. x, 272. 1960. 40s.

MR JOHN J. JOHNSON, Professor of History at Stanford University who has been acting head of a Research Department on American Republics, offers us here a guiding principle for the interpretation of recent Latin American politics. He examines five Latin American countries which between them occupy two-thirds of the ground area and have two-thirds of the population and more than two-thirds of the products of that sub-continent : namely, Argentina, Uruguay and Chile, Brazil and Mexico. These are, in his opinion, the dominant States which will impose their pattern on the rest. Political power, he argues, has passed or is on the point of passing to the middle

classes, and this will ensure stability, progress and orderly democracy. To put it simply, he thinks that these countries are now going through the liberal and in part radical experience of Western Europe in the late nineteenth century : to put it even more simply, he believes they are approximating more and more to the political temper and methods of the United States.

The wars of Latin American liberation were inspired, in part, by English liberal and French revolutionary concepts. These were capable of inspiring revolutionaries ; they were not particularly helpful in keeping order. Practice did not harmonize with theory, and the new governments chose the practice, rejecting the theory : in the clash between liberty and law, they concentrated on the law, which meant, not law in the abstract but order, as the landowners conceived and desired it. From 1850 onwards there was a gradual switch from politics to economics. And in the process a middle class or group developed. To begin with, they were bureaucrats, teachers, professional men, later reinforced from commerce and industry. The land was opened up ; capital was imported, industry stimulated. Cities grew in significance. By 1907, 43% of the people of Chile dwelt in cities, and by 1914, 53% of the population of Argentina. Brazil and Mexico, on the other hand, were still largely rural. The middle class has now secured political control at the expense of the more conservative landed gentry, military and Church.

This new middle group possesses certain characteristics : it is urban rather than rural ; it is progressive, encouraging public education ; it seeks to industrialize and yet to exclude or limit foreign investment ; it is nationalistic and ready to accept and use State intervention ; it is secular in mood and outlook.

Such is Mr Johnson's argument. It is true, on the whole, and fairly obvious. Yet, on closer examination, there are large differences in these five countries which make his guiding principle much less authoritative. Uruguay is its best confirmation. There the conservative forces were not formidable. The Church was relatively weak ; it had no long tradition of missionary work, since there was no large Indian populace ; it had been dependent on Buenos Aires ecclesiastically till 1878. The tiresome civil strife earlier in the century had sapped the prestige of the military. A rapidly modernized economy, the influx of European immigrants and the commanding position of Montevideo favoured the middle classes. Domestic industry was assisted by tariff concessions and credit facilities : foreign investment was restricted. Secular influences asserted themselves, in the divorce laws of 1907 and the abolition of religious teaching in the schools in 1909. Church and State were separated. Here you have the pattern of a liberal, radical, middle-class State.

To this Chile bears some resemblance. The army has adopted a middle-class consciousness and outlook; the Church has encouraged social work and an active lay apostolate. But a long acquaintance with political parties has left a scepticism about their motives and honesty and the belief that national interests are being sacrificed by them for political advantage. This middle-class administration is in no healthy condition.

In Mexico, however, the story is different. The middle groups led the reaction in 1910 against Porfirio Diaz, only to find the initiative literally

swept from their grasp by a popular tide of revolution. They had unleashed forces over which they had no proper control. Their influence between 1920 and 1940 was negative and indirect. It was only after 1940 that they could gradually re-establish themselves under Presidents Camacho and Alemán. Relations have been reopened with other countries, in particular with the U.S.A. ; opponents conciliated ; workers controlled and checked. But there is much discontent on the part of workers and the fear lest the social justice that was the fruit of the revolution is being subordinated to commerce and industry.

Perhaps the biggest challenge to Mr Johnson's theory comes from Argentina, the most developed—culturally and educationally—of the Latin American States. Its pattern in the nineteenth century ran to type : first the dominance of land interests, and towards the close of the century a strong challenge from the middle sections of society. However, the two military *coups d'état* of 1930 and 1943 interrupted this middle-class progress. The Perón regime stressed many of its features : it was urban, not rural ; it was nationalist ; it adopted thoroughgoing State control ; but at the same time it repressed liberty and the middle classes. It sought its main political support in the urban workers—the *descamisados* of Peronista propaganda. Perón's fall was caused in a general way by public opinion among the upper and middle classes ; it was brought nearer by his attacks upon the Church ; and actually accomplished by the armed forces. The post-Peronista government of Argentina is laboriously attempting to rescue the national economy from the straits in which its predecessor left it and to re-introduce a more normal—and this is roughly middle-class—political control.

John Murray

SOME YOUNGER IRISH POETS

MORALITIES. Poems by Thomas Kinsella. Dublin : The Dolmen Press. 1960. 7s. 6d.

A HEART FULL OF THOUGHT. Translations from the Irish by Máire MacEntee. Dublin : The Dolmen Press. 1960. 3s. 6d.

POEMS. By Patrick Creagh, Norman Porter & Desmond O'Grady. Read in the Roman Theatre at Tusculum. 2s. 6d.

These three books are interesting in that they contain the work of the younger generation of Irish poets. Another link that unites them is the early issues of *The Transatlantic Review* in which all of them were published, and of which the European editors were the expatriate poets Desmond O'Grady and Patrick Creagh. There are important differences too : O'Grady and Creagh, while remaining Irish in tone and sensibility, reflect a more cosmopolitan—though not necessarily wider—outlook ; Kinsella and Miss MacEntee, on the other hand, are emphatically Irish in every aspect of their work.

Moralities represents a very definite step in Mr Kinsella's development from *Another September* which received so much acclaim two years ago. The earlier book had much of the verbal subtlety and formal skill of

Moralities but it differed from it in exhibiting a strong personal note. Behind the sour felicities of ' Baggot Street Deserta ' and the finished grace of the title poem, ' Another September,' the poet was at least intermittently visible

> A cigarette, the moon, a sigh
> Of educated boredom, greet
> A curlew's lingering threadbare cry
> Of common loss.

There were certain obscurities too, as in that intriguing poem ' Priest and Emperor ' ; not obscurities that arose from a failure of language alone, but also in a failure to distinguish highly subjective concepts and reactions from those that are universally valid.

Moralities would seem to be almost a deliberate attempt to reverse these tendencies. The book is organized to a highly formal pattern. There are 18 poems, all of which are of 8 lines except an epigrammatical interlude of 12. Furthermore the poems are arranged under separate subject headings, four poems each being devoted to Faith, Love, Death and Song. With this strict imposition of formal limits the poet forces himself to be more economical, clear and objective. He must also meet the challenge of metrical variation within this restricted form.

In fact he is imposing a classical aesthetic on himself which demands a concentration on the artifact to the virtual exclusion of the poet's personality. To all these demands Mr Kinsella rises splendidly and within this small book there are at least a half-dozen pieces that are to my mind entirely successful while there is not one that could be regarded as a failure. The poem that is likely to be most widely quoted—and deserves to be—is his exquisite 'Sisters'. Based on the allied dilemmas of Deirdre and Sybil Ferriter, each of whom lost a husband by treachery, it embodies the eternal reality of woman's fidelity in love rather in the way that ' Leda and the Swan ' embodies woman's treachery.

> Grim Deirdre sought the stony fist, her grief
> Capped at last by insult. Pierce's bride
> Sybil Ferriter fluttered like a leaf
> And fell in courtly love to stain the tide.
> Each for a murdered husband—hanged in silk
> Or speared in harness—threw her body wide,
> And offered treachery a bloody milk ;
> Each cast the other's shadow when she died.

Here is the artifact, clear, economical, chiselled in eloquent proportion. Other poems that similarly crystallize the eternal moment in human destiny are ' Into Thy Hands ', ' The Beer Drinkers ' and ' Handclasp at Euston '. The last, within its rigid limits, is full of unsentimental poignancy as it throws into fugitive relief the tragi-comic figure of the Irish exile on the brink of London's anonymity :

> The engine screams and Murphy isolate
> —Chalk-white comedian—in the smoky glare,
> Dwindles among the churns and tenders. Weight,
> Person, race, the human dwindle there.

It is a pity that occasionally an obscure subjective image intrudes to bedevil the reader's satisfaction, as the last image in this extremely earthy and concrete poem. In describing the way back to Ireland he writes :

> The track
> Swerves to a greener world : sea-rock, thigh-scales.

What on earth does Mr Kinsella mean by ' thigh-scales ' ?

In general the poet rises finely to the challenge of metrical variety as is demonstrated even in the few quotations above. His rhythm is predominantly iambic pentameter, but he varies the rhyming scheme and the stanzaic arrangement from poem to poem. One metrical repetition persists over-much perhaps—his habit of having his first breath-pause in the middle of the third line. This occurs definitely in seven poems and approximately in a few others. It would be pedantry to draw attention to this sort of thing in another poet's work but Mr Kinsella is such a highly conscious and meticulous craftsman that it is perhaps forgiveable. But it is ungrateful of me to quibble about a book from which I got such genuine enjoyment. Mr Kinsella is indisputably the best of our younger poets and is already well on his way to join the distinguished company of Clarke and Kavanagh.

Miss Máire MacEntee is perhaps the only living writer that produces accomplished poetry both in Irish and in English. Like Mr Kinsella she is a highly conscious craftsman who strives hard for the polished work of art. The present booklet contains seven translations from the Irish and four miscellaneous quatrains. In every case the rendering is true to the genius of the Gaelic original whether it is the tortured vehemence of the great folk-poem ' Una Bhán ' or the charming whimsicality of the more classical ' Duibhe id Mhailghibh.'

Miss MacEntee in her original English poetry has shown great skill in using the Gaelic device of assonance instead of rhyme. In a poem called ' Affiliations ' (published in *The Transatlantic Review,* Winter 1959-60) she assonates, ' Made it ' with ' renegue from ', ' complaisance ' and ' sacred ' and brings it off triumphantly. It is strange therefore, that she should opted for straight rhyme in translating 'Una Bhán', a poem originally couched in the freest of assonantal correspondences. Her translation does, in fact, suffer from some rather stiff inversions.

> Una you quickened my mind to madness keen
> Una, you came, fast, me and my God between.

These might have been offset by a more casual sonal pattern.

Straight rhyme, however, is entirely successful in Duibhe id Mhailghibh.

> And she whose wedded eye dares not to linger,
> Shaking the loosened locks about her face,
> Lifts up the silken lattice with a finger,
> To gaze her fill unguessed at by disgrace.

Here everyting of the original comes over, the gracefulness, the humour, the smooth euphonic cadences. Her unobtrusive use of alliteration contributes a great deal to the general charm of the quatrain. One need not know the originals to enjoy these excellent translations—transmitted through the eminently Irish talent of Miss MacEntee, they have become original love poems in another language.

The contemporary Roman school of young Irish poets has not received the attention it deserves in Ireland. While Patrick McDonagh, P. J. Kavanagh and Antony Cronin are being well noticed in English and Irish literary pages, such writers as Desmond O'Grady, Patrick Creagh and Seán O Criadáin are lucky to get occasional mention from our more alert journalists like Cathal O'Shannon and Seamus Kelly.

The present volume is one of a series of readings by Irish and American poets in Rome. At least the Irish poets involved have had to rely largely on these readings and such international literary magazines as *The Transatlantic Review* and *Botteghe Oscure* to publish their works.

Mr O'Grady seems to be the most important of them, and to my knowledge he is the only one of them to have published a book of poems. For such a young man—he is about twenty-five—his background is very cosmopolitan as he has spent the past seven years between London, Paris and finally Rome where he is now settled. His book *Chords and Orchestrations* appeared here in 1956, privately printed, and received some encouraging notices, especially from Mr John Jordan in *Irish Writing* who singled him out as a young poet of promise. This promise has since been undeniably fulfilled. Mr O'Grady has never ceased to develop and mature. The scope of this critique does not allow me to range over his previous published readings and the substantial body of poetry that has appeared in various international magazines and reviews. His brilliant 'Reilly' sequence in which he faces in the third person the painful dilemmas of a modern poet's life is large enough for a separate volume. His translations from the Irish and from the Italian—especially from the late Vincenzo Cardarelli, the first English translations of this poet's work—exhibit a wide-ranging energy and talent that deserves the attention of some Irish publisher.

It is difficult to bring the poet's work into focus, scattered as it is through so many magazines. Much of his earlier work such as the sonnet sequence that ends *Chords and Orchestrations* suffers from a violence in passion and language that the poet had not then brought to heel. But gradually his sense of artistic control has grown and today few Irish poets can claim such an adventurous and subtle sense of rhythm and form. There is a deceptive casualness about many of the present poems that might lead one to overlook their technical skill and the accuracy of the language.

> In the parks and the play-grounds, shifty-eyed watchers
> in colourless clothes
> Are hanging around like agents of death, while
> professional loungers,
> In soft hats and silence, disinterestedly wait for the next
> observation ; and scroungers
> And tricksters are nervously watching what goes.

He has broken with iambics, the rhythm that enslaved him to clichés and rhetoric in his early poetry. The most interesting section of the present collection is a new instalment of his ' Reilly ' sequence. The general tone has reached a stage of strange despair as evidenced in that touching little poem about Reilly and his child :

He watches you out of his penitent eyes
Seeing you damned by the sin of his making you
Blond child of a bombed generation.

In fact O'Grady's predominantly Catholic sensibility seems to have absorbed a great deal of the grim valiancy of modern Continental Existentialism. But the Irish exuberance and drollery must out and it does in his interspersed limericks—written no doubt with nostalgia for his home-town :

The Irish delinquent O'Reilly
Had a weakness for drinking the barley ;
In bars and cafes
He'd often spend days
Unaware of the world entirely.

This is not the only instance of the poet's skill with Byronic rhyme. In any case, at least one Irish reader will be looking forward to Mr O'Grady's next published volume.

In many ways Mr Patrick Creagh's poetry differs from that of Mr O'Grady. Beneath O'Grady's calm surfaces one senses an undertow of violent, almost unruly intensity, that only his most strenuous efforts can contain. Mr. Creagh's art is urbane and cerebral. His conceits and images succeed one another unobtrusively, the effect is quietly cumulative, there are no kicks :

Our eyes fumble like lazy bees
And the lisp of shingle schools them in indolence
Time acquiesces : an obsequious footman,
(Discreetly out of sight) waiting his cue.

I have dwelt a good deal on technical matters in this rather long review, but one must be struck by the texture of these lines, the muted hiss and whisper of the internal cadences. Mr Creagh is a poet of the mind and one who has learned much of the subtle nuances of his craft.

Taken all in all, these three volumes give ample evidence that Irish poetry goes on vigorously renewing itself.

AUGUSTINE MARTIN

HISTORY

THE NEW CAMBRIDGE MODERN HISTORY. Volume X: The Zenith of European Power, 1830–1870. Edited by J. P. T. Bury. Cambridge University Press. 1960. Pp. xxi, 766. 40s.

THE NEW CAMBRIDGE MODERN HISTORY. Volume XII: The Era of Violence, 1898–1945. Edited by David Thomson. Cambridge University Press. 1960. Pp. xxi, 602. 37s. 6d.

The New Cambridge Modern History proceeds on its somewhat erratic way. The plan and technique of the volumes which have so far appeared have been subjected to criticism, in some cases severe, and it has been asked whether the new series does in fact provide an adequate substitute for the brainchild of Lord Acton. One decision adopted by Sir George Clark and his team is

difficult to understand. The omission of any attempt to provide a bibliography for each of the separate volumes is maddening to the scholar and unhelpful, to say the least, to the general reader. It is true that we are promised, if we are patient for another decade or so, that the information on sources and further reading which would be so welcome now will be available for us at the end of the series. It is also true that many contributors to these volumes have tried through the medium of footnotes to slip us under the counter as much bibliographical information as they can. But neither of these expedients is really satisfactory. Is it too late to hope that the editorial committee responsible for the series will reconsider their decision in the case of future volumes, even at the cost of uniformity in the series as a whole?

Of the two volumes now before us, Volume X is rather more satisfactory. Indeed as a balanced general survey of its period it is hard to see how it could be bettered. An introductory chapter by the editor is masterly in its concise sketching of the main themes which later chapters treat in detail. Mr Bury singles out the migratory *Völkerwanderung* to North and South America and to colonial territories as a basic determining factor of the age, as was also its cause, the demographical upsurge of European population. In the industrial, commercial and transport changes which accompanied these demographical transformations (whether as cause or effect is still not quite clear) the United Kingdom took the lead; in a later chapter (xiii, 'The United Kingdom and its world-wide interests') Mr David Thomson shows how Britain became in this age the workshop, banking-house and shipping *entrepreneur* of the world. The rise to self-consciousness of classes and races from the lower rungs of the political and social hierarchies created various gospels grouped loosely round the portmanteau terms 'liberalism' and 'nationalism', each acting as the solvent of old problems and the bringer of new. The rapid advance of scientific research led to the ambition in some quarters to measure the whole of intellectual and practical life by standards proper to science. The traditional views of Churchmen, not always necessarily the same as the fundamental tenets of Christian dogma, were challenged by this outlook, particularly in the fields of geology, biology and Biblical criticism. The Church-State relations of the period, well described by Dr N. Sykes in Chapter iv ('Religion and the relations of Churches and States') are a mixture of concessions and resistances by the Churches, Catholic and Protestant.

It would be impossible to review adequately all the chapters contributed to each volume by its team of experts, but some may be singled out as likely to be of especial interest for the general reader. In Volume X Professor J. A. Hawgood's 'Liberalism and constitutional developments' (Chapter viii) makes some unfamiliar points on a familiar theme, as when he remarks that the Belgian and American patterns of constitution were more influential on the Continent than the British, which was considered *sui generis* and impossible to imitate. Mr Bury in 'Nationalities and Nationalism' (Chapter ix) shows how Paris gradually lost its symbolic position for Nationalist movements all over Europe and how the weakening of this Gallic rationalist influence made for the deliberalizing of Nationalist trends in Central and Eastern Europe. Captain Liddell Hart ('Armed Forces and the Art of War: Armies',

Chapter xii) is as personally trenchant as ever and pins on Clausewitz the responsibility for being the theoretical ancestor of total war. Mr J. M. K. Vyvyan (' Russia in Europe and Asia ', Chapter xiv) performs the difficult task of making sense of Russian history for Western readers and points out how many of the seeds of the Russia of today are to be found in the nineteenth century. The last chapter in the book (' The Far East ', Chapter xxvi), by an old Far Eastern hand, Mr G. F. Hudson, is an excellent survey, particularly of China during the Taiping rebellion. But perhaps the chapter which will attract most is Professor Erich Heller's brilliantly sensitive ' Imaginative Literature ' (Chapter vii). Professor Heller argues that the intellectual and spiritual uncertainty of the age made it inevitable that the novel, the literary form best suited for intense exploration of the individual's perplexities and possible solutions for them, should have dominated nineteenth century literature ; the drama was a painful ghost of its former self, epic poetry had disappeared together with its traditional type of hero, while lyric poetry, beautiful though it still was, was already preparing to retreat into its ivory tower of private symbolism. The Russian novel, the literary climax of the period, is not *sui generis* but marks the peak of a general European phenomenon : ' Russian literature reflects, often in a dramatically heightened and spiritually more poignant way, the social, moral and religious perplexities which are common to Europe as a whole ' (p. 168).

The Era of Violence volume makes a much less satisfactory book and it is hard to see the principles on which it has been arranged. We gather from the last chapter (' European Civilisation in the Twentieth Century ', Chapter xx), the work of the editor, that the intention has been to show how both the triumphs and miseries of our age have late nineteenth-century roots but one may question whether this has in fact successfully been achieved. If anything the reader will rather carry away an impression of the discontinuity between the still very parochial Europe of 1900 and the atom-haunted ' One World ' of the mid-century.

Individual chapters however often succeed in putting into objective historical patterns events which to many readers must still seem almost contemporary. Mr Thomson (' The transformation of social life ', Chapter iii) shows *inter alia* how in the majority of cases the ' green revolution ' of peasant land ownership came too late to keep pace with the modern technological revolution in agriculture, which demanded larger rather than smaller land units for full effectiveness. Sir Robert Ensor (' Political institutions in Europe : Political issues and political thought ', Chapter iv) casts light on problems such as the contribution of Proportional Representation, in what he would regard as its Dutch perversion of ' the national pool ', in undermining parliamentary democracy in Europe between the wars. The chapter on ' Latin America, 1899–1949 ' (Chapter viii) by Mr J. H. Parry, though rather allusive, makes clear how dependence on European intellectual and economic influences slowed up the development of a genuinely indigenous outlook and culture. Against this background the violence of eruptions such as the Mexican Revolution and the present movement in Cuba are explicable.

The arrangement of chapters on general political history defies explanation. Mr Vyvyan contributes a long chapter on ' The approach of the War of 1914 ',

but why was nothing similar supplied for the War of 1939? Similarly 'The War of 1914' (Chapter xiii, by Mr C. T. Atkinson) receives a chapter to itself, but the Second World War is sandwiched into a chapter by various eminent military hands on 'Armed Forces and the Art of War' (Chapter x). Most incredible of all, there is no single detailed survey of the politics of any of the Great Powers except the United States (Chapter vii, by Professor D. W. Brogan); information on phenomena such as Fascism and National Socialism has to be pieced together from scattered sections of the book. 'The Russian Revolution' (Chapter xiv) is dealt with in admirably lucid fashion by Mr Isaac Deutscher, but his chapter takes us no further than November 1917; why was not this author of the standard biographies of Stalin and Trotsky invited to extend his narrative to include the Leninist and Stalinist dictatorships? As it is, his narrative emphasizes the historical irony by which men who thought that they were building a State, in Lenin's own words, 'without police, bureaucrats and a standing army', ended by inflicting both on themselves and on millions of others the most effective and ruthless dictatorship which the world has ever seen.

It may be suggested that the irony in Mr Deutscher's story may also provide a clue to the solving of a problem which so perplexes Mr Thomson in his attempt to sum up in the last chapter. Why did the scientific technology of the twentieth century contribute both to material wellbeing and to material misery, in either case on such a grand scale? A Christian observer might reply that the perversion of motives which Mr Deutscher has traced in miniature in the Russian Revolution may also be traced in the history of Mankind as a whole in any age. This cosmic perversion and the possibility of rectifying it can only for such an observer be explained in terms of Original Sin, Redemption and Grace. It is by no means the least significant phenomenon of 'the era of violence' that one does not expect such a conclusion to be drawn by *The New Cambridge Modern History.*

JOHN B. MORRALL

THE PARISH OF BALLINASLOE: its history from the earliest times to the present day. By Rev Patrick K. Egan. Dublin: Clonmore & Reynolds. 1960. 25s.

THERE has been a very considerable interest in local history during the past few years; but it is not often that we are given a work which illustrates completely the advantages to be gained from this study. Father Egan has been a priest in the parish of Ballinasloe for more than twenty years, and has identified himself with every aspect of the parish's life. The modern parish is the union of two medieval parishes, Kilcloony and Creagh, which are divided by the river Suck a few miles from the point where it flows into the Shannon. Starting with the life of St Grellan, whose life was published by John O'Donovan in his *Tribes and Customs of Hy-Many* from a text that was copied by Michael O'Clery, Father Egan works his way steadily through the earlier period and the medieval centuries to the great break in the religious life of this country in the sixteenth century. He has some valuable comments to

make on the importance of the lands owned by the monastery of Clonmacnois on the west side of the Shannon, and has gathered together all that can be found on the history of the older churches within the area. One point is worth noting as of more general interest. The river Suck is named as the boundary between the two dioceses of Clonfert and Tuam (later Elphin) in the decree of the synod of Rath Breasail. This would have put Kilcloony in Clonfert and Creagh in Tuam ; but both parishes are given as being in Clonfert in the taxation-list of the early fourteenth century. Father Egan (and he may well be correct) thinks that this minor change was made soon after the synod of Rath Breasail, since its decree makes special provision for such changes ' if the clergy of Connacht do not agree to this partition '. But there are other similar changes in the diocesan map of Ireland, some of which were certainly made at later periods ; and it seems to me rash to assume that the boundaries fixed in the early twelfth century continued without change throughout the medieval period.

The sixteenth century brought profound changes, with the arrival of new English settlers. The family which did most to bring new policies into force was the family of Trench, which came to Ireland under James I and got a foothold in Kilcloony during the Cromwellian plantation. They got the earldom of Clancarty at the time of the Union. Father Egan has a dramatic story to tell when this planter family, which had hitherto shown no great interest in religion, espoused the Evangelical cause in the early nineteenth century and brought the full weight of their influence as landlords and churchmen to bear in support of a very active proselytizing campaign.

Another local family, the Brabazons, remained Catholic with the exception of one branch, and made an alliance with the family of Trench. During the eighteenth century there was, as elsewhere in Connacht, a great deal of neighbourly friendliness, and Father Egan gives a vivid account of the failure of the priest-hunters to secure the capture of Bishop Murtagh Donnellan in 1702. His account of the local Catholic schools in and around Ballinasloe during the eighteenth century is perhaps of even greater interest than his account of the sufferings of the clergy—though Ballinasloe was well served by its priests and Clonfert by its bishops. The information which he has been able to collect about teachers and pupils throws much light on the true state of Catholic life across the Shannon—just as his comments on the generally high standard of morality and family life, based on the accounts of sympathetic travellers, are worth noting. The Trench family were formidable bigots in all this story, but they did much for the external prosperity of the town. One traveller in the early nineteenth century reports that when he first saw Ballinasloe ' it was not outdone by even Galway in either filth or a vicious police ' ; but that he had lived to see ' the footpath well paved and swept every day ; not even a bowl of water permitted to be emptied into the streets, nor a car or carriage, even those of gentlemen, permitted to stand in the street without horses ; not a dunghill or loose stone.'

Father Egan has an eye for details of this kind. There is a wealth of local history in these pages : the successful campaign against Clancarty's proselytizing ; the conditions of the people in pre-Famine years ; the evidence

for emigration and population statistics ; the organization of Ballinasloe as a mensal parish of the bishop of Clonfert ; the coming of the Sisters of Mercy ; the Fenians ; the G.A.A. ; the Gaelic League ; and more recent history since 1916.

Here and there notable events occur that concern the parish closely. Local tradition claims two of the neighbourhood as prominent at the battle of Aughrim ; an O'Kelly who had a personal grievance against St Ruth and marked him for the gunmanship of a Trench, who was serving in Ginkel's artillery (though Father Egan throws doubt on this last detail). The political activities of Dr Duggan, Bishop of Clonfert, and his trial in 1873 for alleged intimidation of the electors in a campaign which ended in the defeat of Captain Le Poer Trench, is told in chapter XII. An unexpected item is the appearance of a grandson of Edmund Spenser as one of the ' Irish papists ' transplanted from Cork to Connacht under Cromwell. He appealed to the Protector and urged his claim as grandson of the poet, ' who by his writings touching the reduction of the Irish to civility brought on him the odium of that nation '. But the appeal failed, and Wiliam Spenser found himself possessed of some 1,000 acres near Ballinasloe. He died in 1713, and his son was forced to sell his estate to Frederick Trench of Garbally.

Garbally is a name of which the people of Clonfert have good reason to be proud to-day. The story of that transformation of what had once been the seat of the Trench family is not told here, as the estate lies outside the boundaries of the modern parish ; but it is a suitable conclusion to this whole story. And a word of special thanks is due to Father Egàn for the excellent bibliography at the end of the book, and for the valuable statistical facts which he has printed in a series of appendixes. They run from a group of inquisitions concerning property of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century, through the evidence of the Book of Survey and Distribution for the mid-seventeenth century, to population statistics of the period 1821-1946. *Utinam sic omnes !*

AUBREY GWYNN

SOCIOLOGY

LIMERICK RURAL SURVEY: INTERIM REPORT: MIGRATION. By Patrick McNabb. 1960. Pp. 50. 10s.

THE Limerick Rural Survey began on the 1st January 1959 when Mr Patrick McNabb, having completed consultations and preparations at the University of Wageningen, Holland, took up residence in Limerick and began his preliminary investigations. The project was sponsored by Muintir na Tíre and financed by it with the aid of a grant from the Counterpart Fund. The Survey was carried out by Mr McNabb with the assistance of voluntary workers from the area and experts from many countries. This *Interim Report* contains (1) a brief description of the methods employed in the survey ; (2) an analysis of population trends in Co. Limerick ; and (3) a study of marriage and of education patterns with particular reference to migrants from four selected parishes in the county. The Director of the Survey and the Administrative

Committee are to be congratulated on its production within eighteen months of the beginning of fieldwork.

An interim report has a double scope : those awaiting the results are given an indication of how the research is proceeding and those responsible for the survey obtain comments which assist them in compiling their final report. The Limerick Rural Survey appears to be proceeding satisfactorily. A study of the available statistical data has been completed and the results are summarized in the interim report. Interviews have been carried out in the parishes selected for special study, and a large amount of data on migrants from those parishes has been collected by means of questionnaires distributed to homes. A little of this data had been analysed when the interim report was written, and the general conclusions reached by Mr McNabb are also given. The statements made in this section are interesting ; the inevitable disappointment is that the evidence for many of them will not be available until the final report has been produced.

The final report with a more adequate description of the methodology of the investigation must be awaited before the implications of the survey can be assessed. In particular, further information is needed about the representative nature of the groups interviewed in the selected parishes (p. 11) ; the manner in which the selection of the parishes was made (pp. 8 and 21) ; the persons who provided facts in the completion of questionnaires (pp. 8 and 38), and the migrants who supplied information (p. 32). A member of the Administrative Committee wrote in *Rural Ireland, 1959,* (p. 70), ' I do not think that people are aware of the extent to which surveyors must go to avoid being unscientific in conducting their work ' ; the final report will be an occasion when a detailed instruction in methods of social research would be received painlessly. Many, too, will welcome more detailed commentaries on the tables and a redrawing of some of the maps ; and in the sections on ' Marriage and Migration ' and ' Education and Migration ' all will look forward to having data for the total populations of the selected parishes which will clarify the significance of the information given concerning the migrants in the sample. With such elaborations, and the promised more complete analysis and discussion of the inter-relationship of empirical and cultural factors, the final report should be a document of interest and importance.

CONOR K. WARD

AN INTRODUCTION TO RELIGIOUS SOCIOLOGY, PIONEER WORK IN FRANCE. By F. Boulard. Translation and Introduction to English Edition by M. J. Jackson. London : Darton, Longman and Todd. 1960. Pp. xxviii + 166. 22 Figures. 21s.

FRANCE, the birthplace of sociology, has also been, in more recent times, the source of a movement for sociological research in the sphere of religion, known as *sociologie religieuse,* which has spread rapidly to many parts of the world, and is generally described by direct translations of the French term. Canon Fernand Boulard was one of the first to collaborate with Gabriel Le Bras, the pioneer of this effort to obtain an accurate and detailed empirical

survey of the state of religion in France. In 1955 Canon Boulard published an account of research completed up to that date and an outline of the methods of research which had been developed over the years. That book, *Premiers itinéraires en sociologie religieuse,* is now available in English under the title *An Introduction to Religious Sociology.* The Reverend Michael Jackson of the Sheffield Industrial Mission does not appear to be given sufficient credit when he is described only as translator and author of the introduction. He has, also, re-edited sections of the book, inserted notes for the benefit of non-French readers, and revised the bibliography.

The first part of Canon Boulard's book begins with a study of the 1952 edition of the Map and of its implications, goes on to synthesize the findings of research carried out up to 1955, and ends with a discussion of the relevance of this kind of research to the apostolate. This first section is very valuable ; it illustrates the importance of systematic fact-finding. Over-all estimates are hazardous and may at times be misleading, says Canon Boulard, but the attempt must be made because ' figures based on pure guesswork are in circulation, and are quoted without question ' (p. 8). The 1952 Map is given at the back of the book, and the text is interspersed with excellently drawn maps and diagrams. A clear and factual picture of the religious situation in many parts of France is thus provided. (The situation has not changed much since the 1952 Map was drawn, and that map differs little from the one compiled in 1960 which was given in *Informations catholiques internationales,* 119, 1st May 1960, page 11.) In his discussion of the practical implications of the research findings Canon Boulard writes forcefully of the need for attention to the impact of social factors, and of the influence of the milieu and the neighbourhood grouping on religious behaviour and attitudes.

The second part of the book is entitled ' Some Advice on Method '. A methodology of research has developed gradually and has been relatively standardized since about 1954. The object of the pioneers has been to enable all those interested to carry out surveys, by supplying them with instructions and ready-made schedules. It was hoped that in this way accurate descriptions of individual parishes would be produced, thereby laying the foundations for a national synthesis. Canon Boulard gives a description of the methods most widely used in France in both rural and urban areas, and from his own experience he emphasizes the need for careful planning, if reliable and objective results are to be secured.

The methods described here are widely used in France, Belgium, Italy and other countries. They have been used in some Church of England churches in the Sheffield area, and in a Catholic parish in London. For some years the Newman Demographic Survey has been engaged on the problem of adapting these methods for use in Catholic parishes in Britain, and two experimental surveys have been carried out. It is interesting that the English translation of Canon Boulard's book was undertaken by the Director of the Church of England Sheffield Industrial Mission (with a nihil obstat and imprimatur from the Archdiocese of Westminster). The research methods outlined might, indeed, be more easily applicable with Church of England congregations than in the populous Catholic parishes of the English-speaking

world. It is hard to imagine the larger Catholic Sunday Mass congregations completing questionnaires during the sermon time, even if they were the ingenious schedules which can be completed without the use of writing materials.

The bibliography in the original French edition understandably contained mainly French works. Though some recent publications are not included, this bibliography provides a representative selection. The translator added to the bibliography an English section and an American section. These are intentionally selective. It is a pity that they had to be so brief ; about as many references more would have made the English section complete, and a few additional pages could have made the American section more representative and more satisfactory. Some readers might be saved unnecessary expense were it pointed out that, except for historical references, the UNESCO bibliography mentioned on page 158 is practically useless as far as Britain is concerned.

French religious sociology, with which this book deals, is described as the study of how religious behaviour is affected by social structure and sociological factors. In practice it has been, until recently, concerned almost exclusively with the enumeration of those Catholics who attend church, and the establishment of correlations between attendance and social class. A very great number of surveys have been completed. These surveys are generally sociographical. The methodology used does not appear to exhaust the possibilities of social research nor to obtain all the information which is available : little attention is paid to techniques of social research which have been developed in recent years in an attempt to take account of the specifically human factors in social life.

An Introduction to Religious Sociology is a book which deserves careful study. Much can be learned from its emphasis on the value of empirical data, and its discussions of the importance of systematic factual standardized records. It is very valuable as an introduction to research in the sphere of religion in France. It is not an introduction to the sociology of religion as it is known in English-speaking countries, nor is it a handbook of methods of social research as it is practised by professional sociologists and social research institutes.

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WORK, AN INQUIRY INTO CHRISTIAN THOUGHT AND PRACTICE. John M. Todd (Ed.). London : Darton, Longman, and Todd. 1960. Pp. viii + 225. 30s. (Stiff paper, 21s.).

In a message to the Amsterdam Congress of Pax Romana in August 1949 Pope Pius XII said ' At the present day, Catholic theologians must be able to rely on those of our sons who, as scholars or technicians, philosophers or men of law, historians, sociologists or doctors, can provide for their theological studies the data of competent and reliable technical knowledge '. Since 1952 a group of priests and laymen with an end of this nature in view have been meeting at Downside Abbey, England, ' to discuss the problems involved in communicating Christian doctrine to the men and women of

our century'. Once every two years the meeting is enlarged by inviting to a week-long symposium other men and women who are highly qualified in their own spheres. The proceedings of the third such symposium are published in this volume, *Work*, edited by John M. Todd.

The book is in four parts. In the first part (pp. 5–43) papers by Hilary Armstrong, Robert A. Markus, and Patrick McGrath provide a background with discussions of work in Ancient Greece and Rome, Early Christianity, and in the England of the past. In the second part (pp. 48–119) eight people discuss their personal experiences, and explain the meaning of their work to them, and its place in their everyday lives as Catholics. The next section (pp. 123–168) contains four discussions about the manner in which work should be organized. The papers are by J. M. Todd ('Christian Theories'), R. F. Trevett ('Organization in Modern Industry'), G. Woodcock ('Trades Unions and Managers'), and R. Brech ('An International Framework for Work and Christian Cooperation'). Finally (pp. 173–221) there are the three central papers of the symposium in which Laurence Bright, O.P., Dom Sebastian Moore, and Herbert McCabe, O.P., point the way to an expression of the Church's traditional teaching about work which is related to the experiences of the men and women of today and phrased in terms of contemporary social conditions.

The proceedings of the two previous symposia were criticized by some reviewers as scrappy and inconclusive. (They have also been widely and enthusiastically welcomed.) This criticism was at least ungenerous. The symposia do not set out to provide a systematic exposition of Catholic doctrine. The essence of the symposia is discussion of the realities of everyday life in the context of Catholic thought. The participants are not searching for truth. They already possess it and are concerned to combine concrete inquiries with theological appraisal of their findings, and they attempt through discussion to 'enable the truths of reason and revelation to be seen in the context of the living, sociological realities of our time' (p. 1). The results, in consequence, are at times uneven in quality, but they are of unvarying interest and value.

The most recent symposium will be considered by some to be even more valuable than its predecessors *The Springs of Morality* (1956) and *The Arts, Artists and Thinkers* (1958). The approach is similar to that in the earlier symposia. It is difficult to summarize the contributions, and to try to discuss them briefly would be unfair. The volume, indeed, could very well be used as a 'textbook' for a discussion group in social studies; its eighteen chapters would provide material for thought and starting-points for discussion for an entire year. It does not attempt to provide pat solutions, nor to achieve an all-inclusive synthesis, but it does what is possibly more important for contemporary society when it presents results of careful thought, attempts at precise formulation of the practical implications of Catholic doctrine, and living and inspiring personal accounts of Christian working lives.

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